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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

GRACE AMBROSE

- SICK THOUGHTS – My Mess My Life LP
- AMERICAN HATE – Dead Squeeze EP
- DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP
- DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP
- IMPALERS – Psychedelic Snutskallar 12"
- REBEL KIND – Today LP
- LATEX – Demo
- C.R.A.S.H. – Barely Alive EP
- HARD SKIN – Saturday Night/Someone Like You 45
- S.H.I.T. – Feeding Time/Private Lies 45

LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU

- IMPALERS – Psychedelic Snutskallar 12"
- SOLUNSKI FRONT – Mali Svet LP
- LETHAL OVERDOSE – Unfinished BusinessLP
- DEZERTER – Ile Procent Duszy? LP
- DESTRUYE Y HUYE – EP / S.H.I.T. – Feeding Time 45
- 1984 – Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu LP
- DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP
- SEE YOU IN HELL – Odvolej flexi
- SUNSHINE WARD – Demo EP
- CROSS – Pyre/Repetition 45 / HARD SKIN – 45

MATT BADENHOP

- SOLUNSKI FRONT – Mali Svet LP
- OOZE – Don't Lose Sight Of Misdirection CD
- FACE THE RAIL – Learning To Die LP
- NO SIR I WON'T – The Whole Fucking World Is Shit LP
- DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP
- PORKERIA – Desde la Era del Terror LP
- C.R.A.S.H. – Barely Alive EP
- ORATIONS – demo
- 1984 – Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu LP
- THE APOSTLES – Punk Obituary LP

WILL BLOMQUIST

- DYSTOPIA – Human=Garbage 2xLP
- DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP
- DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP
- 1984 – Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu LP
- FORWARD – Against Their Insanity 12"
- CROSS – Pyre/Repetition 45
- AGATHA – Gravis Atque Gravior LP
- THE APOSTLES – Punk Obituary LP
- JACKALS – Violence Is… EP
- DEATH DRIVE/ALARIC – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- RAZZ – live
- DEAF WISH – LP
- DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP
- DREAMSALON – Soft Stab LP
- SUSAN ATKINS DIET – Vagina Envy EP
- SICK THOUGHTS – My Mess My Life LP
- REAL KIDS – Shake...Outta Control LP
- THE CHEMICALS – Out of My Mind/Run and Hide 45
- BARRERACUDAS – Promises, Promises 45
- MATT K SHRUGG – Goes Bananas flexi

ROBERT COLLINS

- FORWARD – Against Their Insanity 12"
- RASH TOUNGE – Treads of Progress EP
- PUSRAD – Erarre Humanum Est LP
- VEUVE S.S. – Descente EP / SUNSHINE WARD – EP
- FACE THE RAIL – Learning to Die LP
- DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP
- AMERICAN HATE – Dead Squeeze EP
- S.H.I.T. – Feeding Time 45 / CUDGEL – live
- PORKERIA – Desde la Era del Terror LP
- LIMBS BIN, BRICKS, COSMIC TOILET, ZAP – demos

LAYLA GIBBON

- DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP
- FAMILY OUTING, ASESINATO DEL PODER – demos
- C.R.A.S.H. – Barely Alive EP
- DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP
- REBEL KIND – LP / DREAMSALON – Soft Stab LP
- BOSTON STRANGLER – Fire LP / AMERICAN HATE – EP
- SICK THOUGHTS – My Mess My Life LP
- TROPHY WIFE – All the Sides CD
- SLENDER, LATEX – demos
- BIG CRUX – Ponchito LP / FACE THE RAIL – LP

DAN GOETZ

- NO SIR I WON'T – The Whole Fucking World Is Shit LP
- C.R.A.S.H. – Barely Alive EP
- BIG CRUX – Ponchito LP
- SUNSHINE WARD – Demo EP / S.H.I.T. – 45
- TRENCHES – demo and live / NO STATIK – live
- PUSRAD – Erarre Humanum Est LP / STERILE MIND – live
- BLOOD SUCKERS – Night of the Sadist EP / DYSTOPIA – Human=Garbage 2xLP
- PESADILLA DISTOPIKA – No Hay Ninguna... EP
- CRAYON – Brick Factory LP

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COVER: Unarmed people of color murdered by cops between 2000 and the present; list compiled by NAACP

BACK COVER: Hysterics by Che Hise-Gattone

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

GREG HARVESTER

BIG CRUX – Ponchito LP	VCR – Greatest Hits!!! EP
KOMPLIKATIONS – Going Down 12"	HARD SKIN – Saturday Night/Someone Like You 45
NO SIR I WON'T – The Whole Fucking World Is Shit LP	MAMA – demo
CIVIL UNION – demo	BLACK LOVE – demo
AMERICAN HATE – Dead Squeeze EP	BI-MARKS – live

KENNY KAOS

HARD LEFT – Skinheads Home for Christmas 45	BARRERACUDAS – Promises, Promises 45
P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. – Hit and Run/45 Minutes 45	THE WEDNESDAY KNIGHTS – Mister Devil 10"
THE RIVALS – Here Comes the Night/Both Sides 45	ÜBERTOS – We Do Eat Lions LP
APATHETICS / COLD INSTITUTION – split EP	VCR – Greatest Hits!!! EP
THE CHEMICALS – Out of My Mind/Run and Hide 45	DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP

CAROLYN KEDDY

VCR – Greatest Hits!!! EP	URBAN JUNIOR – The Truth About Dr. S & Mr. P CD
SICK THOUGHTS – My Mess My Life LP	S.H.I.T. – Feeding Time/Private Lies 45
KOMPLIKATIONS – Going Down 12"	DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP
DEAF WISH – LP / BROKEN PRAYER – Wow 45	REAL KIDS – Shake...Outta Control LP
HARD SKIN – Saturday Night/Someone Like You 45	CRAYON – Brick Factory LP /JINGLE BELL ROCKS – film

RAY LUJAN

7YEARSBADLUCK – Bridges CD	JOANNA GRUESOME / TRUST FUND – split LP
APERS – Confetti On The Floor CD	P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. – Hit and Run/45 Minutes 45
BARRERACUDAS – Promises, Promises 45	YOUNG CONSERVATIVES – 12"
BAT BITES – CD / DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – 3xLP	ZERO BOYS - Hollywood CD
HARD LEFT – Skinheads Home for Christmas 45	BI-MARKS – live

FRED SCHRUNK

CRUDE STUDS – Night Bathe EP	1984 – Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu LP
S.H.I.T. – Feeding Time/Private Lies 45	PORKERIA – Desde la Era del Terror LP
DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP	NO SIR I WON'T – The Whole Fucking World Is Shit LP
HARD SKIN – Saturday Night/Someone Like You 45	LIFE LIKE – Savages EP
VICIOUS PLEASURES – Scattered EP	C.R.A.S.H. – Barely Alive EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

Garlika says "Shhhh..."

DIANA VASHTI

OLD SOUL / LENTIC WATERS – split 12"	VICIOUS PLEASURES – Scattered EP
DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – Hot Box 3xLP	SOLPÄÄTOS – Robotti EP
DESTRUYE Y HUYE – Oscura Sociedad EP	C.R.A.S.H. – Barely Alive EP
SBSM – live	1984 – Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu LP
APATHETICS / COLD INSTITUTION – split EP	AUTARKEIA / ME AND GOLIATH – split 12"

ZINE TOP TEN

Communicating Vessels #26	*Rochester Teen Set Outsider* #29
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#81/Feb '90. The Hard-Ons, Concrete Sox, Naturecore, Blockade, Public Humiliation, 7 Minutes of Nausea, Colera, Rhythm Collision, Zero Boys reunion.

#144/May '95. Piss Shivers, Back with a Bung!, Screamer, Nekhei Naatza, US Bombs, Jayne County, Stitches, Loudmouths, Fightingcause, Price of Silence, Bob Suren/Failure Face, Circus Ridiculous

#145/June '95. Conflict, No Empathy, Schleprock, Screw 32, The Harries, The Rejects, Badger, MC5, Bob Cutler, Ted Rall & his cartoons

#146/July '95. Riverdales, TPOS, Bristles, Express of Fur, Spanakorzo, Underhand, Schleprock, Aut Aut, Head, McCrackins, Chaos Days.

#147/Aug '95. Swingin' Utters, Skonk, Mickey and the Big Mouths, Norman Mayer Group, Overbass, Respect, Undersirables, Das Klown, Nothing of Merit, Lunkhead, The Stooges.

#149/Oct '95. Campus Tramps, Richard the Roadie, Bad Luck Streak, Chumpslap, Diferentes Actitudes Juveniles, The Humpers, pet UFO, No Violence, Manic Hispanic.

#150/Nov '95. New York Loose, Splatterheads, Pipe, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Snap-Her, Pregnant Men, Sick Boys, Smellie Fingers, Essential 50s.

#151 pt.1/Dec '95. Padded Cell, Pleasure Fuckers, Supersnazz, Discordance Axis, Squirtgun, 100, 00 Body Bags, Diaboliks, Titans, Misfits.

#151 pt.2/Dec '95. My White Bread Mom, The Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/humanity, Stains, Lowdowns, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue, Beatnik Termites.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottomfeeders, Slip, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-fract, Dead End Kids, The Heartbreakers.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hachetface, ADZ, Karen Monster, NOTA, Little Ugly Girls, Stun Guns, Gutfiddle, Dimestore Haloes, Ocymoron.

#154/Mar '96. The Motards, Subincision, Stisism, The Donnas, The Stallions, Count Backwards, Final Warning.

#155/Apr '96. Hockey Teeth, The Surfin' Turnips, Pussy Crush, Cro-Mags, High Plains Drifter, Slight Slappers, Third Degree, Anti-Flag.

#156 pt.1/May '96. Fumes, Public Toys, Crunch, Peter and the Test Tube Babies, Nails of Hawaiian, Splash Four, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#157/June '96. Sons of Hercules, The Heroines, The Criminals, The Rudiments, The Brain Bats, Chinese Millionaires, Your Mother, Against All Authority, Yellow Scab, Wardance.

#158/July '96. The Gain, The Process, Brother Inferior, The Problematics, Judge Nothing, Ashlet Von Hurter and the Haters, Working Stiffs, The Break-Ups, Buzzcocks.

#159/Aug '96. The Smugglers, The Tone-Deaf Pig Dogs, Round Ear Spock, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. The Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, The Mormons, John Q Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Apocalypse Babys, The Business, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothng Cool, Gob, Sink, Sires, Newton Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Candy Snatchers, The Phantom Surfers, The Stain, Panic, The Hysterics, National Guard, Torches to Rome, Restos Fosiles Maniacs, Snuka, Redemption 87, Torture Kitty.

#164/Jan '97. Naked Aggression, Lil Bunnies, Sparkle More, Tab Hunter, Bar Feeders, Jabberwocky, Auto Control, The Hookers, Epileptix, Acrid, The Vibrators.

#165/Feb '97. Blanks 77, savage Malignant, Emily's Sassy Lime, The Real McKenzies, The Millionaires, Dropkick Murphys, The No-Talents, The Hives, Sea Monster, He's Dead Jim, Defiance, Bou Sou Nezumi, The Freeze. Richard Hell.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew, Dead Boys.

#170/July '97. Gauze, No Fraud, Nobodys, Sloppy Seconds, The Forgotten, Thee Viceroys, Brian/Grand Theft Audio Records, Dank Jones, Kuro.

#171/Aug '97. Strychnine, Idiots, Patrick Grindstaff/Pelado Records, Misnathropists, Race Traitor, violent Socity, Knuckleheads.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, The Bristols, My 3 Scu, The Space Shits, Chris/Pessimiser Records, The Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. The Education Issue. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder Bladder Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity.

#175/Dec '97. Boiling Man, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Halos, Exploding Crustaceans, Heartdrops, Last Year's Youth, One Man Army, Piao Chong, Those Unknown.

#176/Jan '98. The Wongs, Palatka, Stalingrad vs. Voorhees interview, Upstairs People, Squidboy, Izgoy, Beltones, Skygrain, Scared of Chakra, 1-4-5's, Ducky Boys, Jon Cougar Concentration.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Useless ID, Dropout, Society Gone Mad, Pinhead Circus, Quarantine, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Dehumanized, Chumbawamba revisited.

#178/Mar '98. Forgotten Rebels, Pervirella, Dirtys, Letterbombs, Go-Devils/Gyogun Rend's/Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, American Steel.

#179/Apr '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Chapter Eleven Records, Randumbs, Garage Rats, Spat & the Guttersnipes, They Still Make Records, P.A.W.N.S., Poser, Douche Flag, Explosive Kate.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Jack Saints, Discontent, Mademoiselle Records, Slack Factor, Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Eyeliners, Infiltrators, TV Killers.

#181/June '98. Radio Rebels, Gainesville Free Radio, Reclaiming the Airwaves, All Bets off, Bonecrusher, Summer Jack, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, Cell Block Five, Grapefruit, D.D.I., Normals.

#182/July '98. The Headcoatees, B-Movie Rats, Vapids, Manchurian Candidates, Squiggy, Jumpin' Landmines, Gob, Texas Terri & The Stiff Ones, Budget Girls, Bruisers, Dead End Kids, .nema, Discount.

#185/Oct '98. Beatnik Termites, Wimpy Dicks, NME, Raxola, Armed and Hammered, Traitors, Dylan McKays, W.O.R.M., Tezacrifico, Roswells.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. The Real Kids, Cretins, Sawn Off, Third Party, Heroines, Spider Cunts, No Class. Holidays in the Sun, Dead Kennedys.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#191/Apr '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Kangaroo Records, Burning Kitchen, Polythene, Iggy Scam.

#193/June '99. Munster Records, DS-13, Safety Pins, Mullets, Pussycats, Piolines, Bad Stain, Houseboy, Bodies, False Alarm, Darlington.

#194/July '99. Fokkewolf, God Hates Computers, Deathreat, Kid Dynamite, Last Machine, Aside, Hoppin Mad, Flesh Eating Creeps, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, CU Next Tuesday Records, RC5, The Havenots, Ill Tempered, Revlons, Dysentery, Larry and the Go Nowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Product X, The Pricks, Orchid, Reaching Forward, Grissle, Third Degree, Catharsis, Emerge.

#197/Oct '99. Lower Class Brats, Waifle, Reducers SF, Showcase Showdown, Futuro Incierto, Deadstate, Reactor No. 7, GodsHateKansas.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, The Victims, Shotwell, Outlast, Pressure Point, A//Political, Bump-N-Uglies, The Dictators.

#199/Dec '99. The Locust, Enemy Soil, Mt St Helens, Rejuvenate, Black Cat Music, Ratos De Porao, United Super Villains, Razlog Za, G-3.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Helvis, Ancient Chinese Secret, The Curse, Skipard Reason (Christian Corner), Hers Never Existed, Toxic Narcotic, Big Boys.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s, " the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/Mar '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, GOre Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Aus Rotten, 9 Shocks Terror, Hissy Fits, Anti/Dogmatikss, White Stripes, Rumpshaker fanzine, artists Fly & Seth Tobocman.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#215/Apr '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records.

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace.

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob.

#219/Aug '01. Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, P.U.N.K., Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sept '01. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum.

#221/Oct '01. Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, Salad Days author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing.

#223/Dec '01. Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS-13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. Cheetah Chrome, Caustic Christ, Haymaker, Stardumb Records, and more.

#233/Oct '02. Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235 Dec '02. Anti-War Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?," "Unfinished American Revolution" and "Axis of Empire," Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn, Long Island DIY scene report.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut The Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, The Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC, " Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What The Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, TRUST zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" article.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#251/Apr '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vra.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston & Germany scene reports.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04. The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, Al, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/Mar '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/Apr '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report.

#267/Aug '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/Sept. '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida scene report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/Oct '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/Nov '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/Dec '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/Jan '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/Feb '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/Mar '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (part two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/Aug '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/Sept '06. Hjertestop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & worldwide punk scene reports.

#281/Oct '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/Nov '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, TRUST zine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/Dec '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris zine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/Jan '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) part one, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/Feb '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) part two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona scene report.

#286/Mar '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/Apr '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/Aug '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannan, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page MRR retrospective photo spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/Sept '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/Oct '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/Nov '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/Dec '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. the Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/Jan '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/Feb '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/Mar '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/Apr '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/Aug '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photo spread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/Sept '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/Oct '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/Nov '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/Jan '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/Feb '09. Ooga Boogas, Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/Mar '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/Aug '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/Sept '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown, Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany scene report.

#318/Nov '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/Dec '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/Mar '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/Apr '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial, , Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans and Calgary scene reports.

#327/Aug '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian scene report, Ratcharge zine, and Culo.

#328/Oct '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic scene reports.

#330/Nov '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland scene report.

#333/Feb '11. The Welders, Touch & Go fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela scene report, Olympia scene report.

#334/Mar '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC scene report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian scene report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This Is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY scene report.

#338/July '11. Zouo, Inservibles, Krömosom, Useless Eaters, Nightgaun, No Problem, Raw Nerves, Family Man Lost Tribe.

#339/Aug '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cocskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History part 2.

#340/Sept '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Deaf Club Oral History, Czech Punk History part 3.

#341/Oct '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel zine.

#342/Nov '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/Dec '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R., Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor.

#344/Jan '12. OBN IIIS, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Blookrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary part 1, Means to an End Fest, Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matresses zine.

#345/Feb '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report part 2, the Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/Mar '12. Bärchen und die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spokey Jacket, Krömosom Tour of Japan, Globsters, Nigh Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise records, Refuse records.

#347/Apr '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester zine, Iron hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii scene report.

#349/June '12. Omegas, Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanásia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Inly Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek scene report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyre, Chis Boarts Larsen, Maria de Piedade Morais.

#351/Aug '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's Worst & Best, the Tim Yo Covers & Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Juan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/Sept '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaarallinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/Oct '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Peruvian Underground part 1, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/Nov '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumen, O Inimigo, the Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diary part 2, Girth records.

#355/Dec '12. Avi Spivak, Red Dons, the Estranged, Agrimonia, Antimelodix, Napolnariz, La Armada, DHK, Breathing Light, the Victims European tour diary, Hamilton Ontario scene.

#357/Feb '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit scene report.

#358/Mar '13. 2012 Year End Top Tens, Brontez Purnell, Potty Mouth, Nitad, Schizophazia, East Anglia scene report.

#359/Apr '13. Sickoids, Hassler. Divorce. Cancer Spreading. la Flingue. the Line. White Murder, the Paper Bags versus the Meat Sluts. Greenville, SC scene report.

#360/May '13. Stress, Proxy, the Kids, Kalte Lust, HIRS, Autonomy, Nuclëar Fröst, Dead Air Studio, Blood Orange Infoshop, Death Traitors, Elks Lodge Massacre Revisited.

#361/June '13. Organize and Arise, Fear of Extinction, The Rats Tour Diary, Kathleen Hanna, The Shorts, Hard Feelings, No Power, Melusaaste, We Got Power zine part I.

#362/July '13. Jeff Paul, TRUST zine, Shaved Women, Hondartzako Hondakinak, Kurraka, Born Wrong, Homicide, United Arab Emirates & Toronto, Canada scene reports, We Got Power zine part II.

#363/Aug '13. Las Otras, Toinen Vaihtoehto zine, Sudor, Terveet Kädet, Black & White, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Arturo Vega, Ruined Families, Baitline!!! zine, R.O.T.T.E.R., No Mistake, Siren Songs, Yorba Linda, CA scene report.

#364/Sept '13. Last Chaos, Snob Value, NE! Records, RAD, Asile, Whatever Brains, The New Flesh, Trashies, Forgotten Generation, Nightfall/Population Zero, Texas Filth scene report.

#365/Ocotber '13. Condition Tour Diary, Zudas Krust, Doomed Society Radio, Kontrasekt, Bib Black Cloud, Hero Dishonest, Violent Party, Helvetin Viemärit, Malcolm, Clearview Records, Brno, CZ scene report.

#366/Nov '13. Chaos Destroy, Permanent Ruin, Thisclose, Halsey Swain, Rosa Apatrida, No More Fiction, Räjäyttäjät, Nudes, Tarantuja, Destruye y Huye, Vertical House Records, Punk Photo Roadtrip.

#367/Dec '13. The Mob, Creem, Gag, generacion Suicida, Good Throb, Force Fed Drugs, Total Trash, Life Chain, Concrete Worms, War//Plague, Julia Ostertag, Bad American.

#368/Jan '14. Queer Issue with Anti-Corpos, Shopping, Glory Hole, Porcelain, Strong Boys, Ejaculoid, Closet Burner, Peeple Watchin', Samuel Shanahoy, Dures et Gays, Priests, Groke, Screaming Queens tour diary, Queer Zine Fest London, International queer scene report.

#369/Feb '14. Dezerter, Arctic Flowers, Stoic Violence, Strange Factory, Gobierno Militar, Poliskitzo, Voight-Kampff, Rat/Xerox, Nü-kle-er Blast Suntan.

#370/Mar '14. Year End Top Tens, Nervosas, Komplikations, Mallwalkers, New Orleans punk documentary Almost Ready.

#371/April '14. Bill Bondsman, Crapoulet Records, O! Kult, Rational Animals, Stab, Woolf, Varix, New York's Alright Fest, Miami scene report.

#372/May '14. EU's Arse, Siege, XAXAXA, Razorcake, Alert! Alert! Space Wolves, Rhythm of Cruelty, Straight Crimes, PMMA, Strange Attractor, Revenge of the Psychotronic Man, Scotland scene report.

#373/June '14. Anti You, Crusades, Rat Damage, Hank., Cottaging, Pesadilla, Distopika, Fed Up Fest, Damn Broads, Destry Hampton, Ben Snakepit & Mitch Clem, Los Culitos, The Lowest.

#374/July '14. No Babies, Grand Collapse, Gulag Beach, 1984, Quaaludes, Ausmuteants, Countdown to Armageddon, Wañuy, Fear of the Future, Bishops Green, Colombia scene report, Igor Vidmar, Endless Grinning Skulls.

#375/Aug '14. Una Bèstia Incontrolable, Eiefits, Extreme Noise Records, Vertigo, Glue, S.U.S, Svin: Leningrad Punk Progenitor, Thee Mighty Fevers, Cool Death Records, Miscalculations, Born Wrong Tour Diary.

#376/Sept '14. Dishrags, Gas Rag, SHIT, Iron Lung Records, Far-Out Fangtooth, Kuudes Silmä, Maailmanloppu, Paul Birnbaum of Septic Death, Extincion de los Insectos, Patras, Greece scene report, Traces in the Snow: '80s Siberian Punk.

#377/Oct '14. Fracaso, Frightwig, Government Flu, Mymanmike, Mind Cure Records, Era Of Fear, Men Oh Pause, Elegy, Harsh Words, photos from Beserktown Fest & NY's Latino Punk Fest, Mexico City scene report, Yecatl Peña.

#378/Nov '14. Yugoslavia Retrospective part 1: Slovenia w/ Buldogi, ToŽibabe, Indust-Bag, Quod Massacre, Pankrti, Grupa 92, Šund, and Kuzle. Also: Big Zit, Ooze, Yi, Supreme Echo Label, Philly's Rockers! show photos, Australia scene report.

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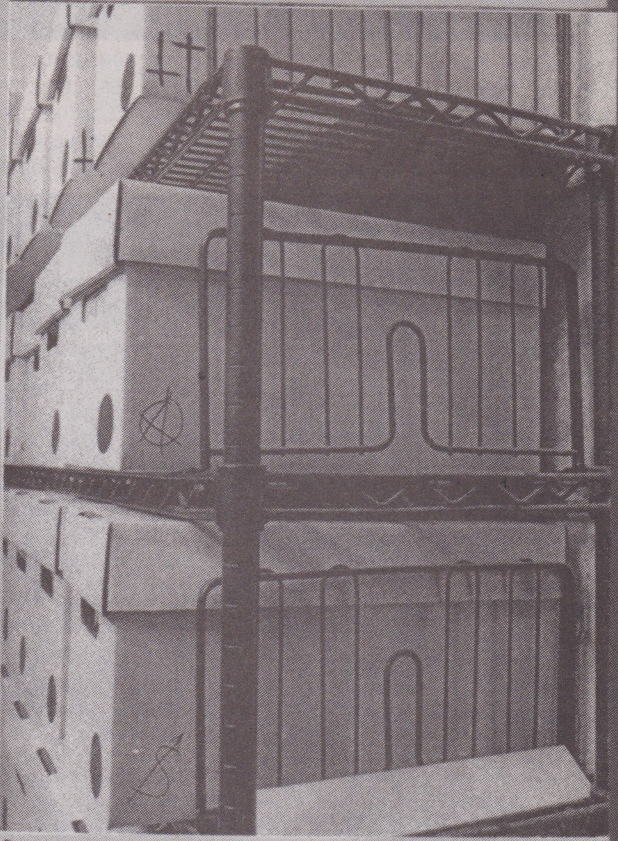

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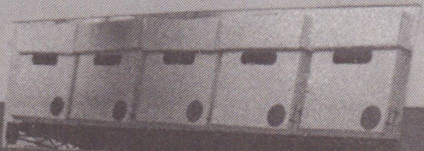

LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Hi *MRR*ers,

I am pretty shocked to see that your new issue [#380] features a label profile of Don Giovanni Records in New Jersey. While at the moment it is an independent label, Joe/Don Giovanni seem heavily oriented towards using punk as a stepping stone to break out into the corporate "indie" world. You don't have to know them personally (I don't), and it doesn't take much searching on the internet to figure this out.

A prime example is Don Giovanni's current PR company: Girlie Action. It seems to handle promo for most of their bands, as well as a bunch of other big indies and majors. Girlie Action markets itself as much as a "full vertical management" company as a PR company, so Don Giovanni seems to be pretty much in a partnership with them at this point. Girlie Action also proudly, openly represents some really nasty multinational corporations (such as Microsoft, Guitar Center, Diesel, and Scion) that are eager to spiff up their image and associate themselves with the credibility that "underground" culture can provide—the kind of commercial commodification that really used to piss punks off in the '90s but no one seems to blink an eye at now because they are overwhelmed with information to sort through. Doesn't make it any less shitty, especially when the underground is used as a stepping stone to break into the world of commercialized "indie" pop used in car / furniture / computer / gasoline / pharmaceutical ads and the like.

Here's the website (girlieaction.com/about) and here's the relevant text:*"[Girlie Action] have also created PR and marketing campaigns for clients such as Puma, Ray-Ban, Microsoft, Scion, Skull Candy, Absolut, Guitar Center and Diesel, making us one of the most sought-after agencies for introducing innovative artists and unique entertainment-driven products and events to the most influential tastemakers in the country."*

Maybe Don Giovanni should check themselves and who they choose to do business and associate with, especially as they are making themselves out to be such an ideologically pure, punk, independent label. So I'm guessing we will get to hear a Priests song in a Microsoft ad soon?

In an advertising-saturated world this might not make any difference to the readers of *VICE* or whatever, but this is *MRR* and it remains valid by holding itself to a higher ethical standard for independent music and radical culture. Maybe you should take a closer, more critical look at the "indie" hipsters (carpetbaggers) who would love to piggyback on punk's current popularity resurgence before devoting print space to their endeavors.

—A '90s Punk

As a recently relocated Philadelphian, I've had the pleasure of seeing many Don Giovanni affiliated bands play many times, in basements, infoshops, kitchens, and art galleries. I think some of the musicians on their label are the punkest out there—Downtown Boys and Priests come to mind as untouchable and incendiary musical and political forces. If you ever get a chance to see either, go. I'll abandon this job, throw out my records, and get "Poseur" tattooed on my forehead the day either of those groups sell a song to Microsoft. They're not using punk as a stepping stone to anything. As far as I know, no Don Giovanni bands have advertisement placements, but I do believe that the people who run the label would leave that choice completely up to the musicians themselves.

I might not choose to work with a publicist myself, but I don't automatically begrudge a label for doing so, so long as they are able to do so on their own terms. As someone who does know many of the people involved with the label in various ways, I know that they wouldn't compromise those terms for the sake of "exposure." We asked Joe Steinhardt of Don Giovanni to respond to your letter. And anonymity? Come on!

—Grace Ambrose, A Current Punk

Dear anonymous '90s punk,

Good to see the letters section of MRR *hasn't changed much over the years. Your concerns about the commodification of underground culture are worth worrying about, but nothing you wrote in your letter actually makes any sense. If you were accusing me or Don Giovanni Records of anything that was taking place in reality I could try to clear things up for you. Instead, it seems like your letter is based in your imagination and on some kind of fantasy of what we may someday do in the future. I can argue with fact, but I can't argue with your imagination.*

The crux of your letter seems to be that punk is a stepping stone for us and that soon we will be selling our music to Microsoft; two things that aren't happening in the present, and of which there is no reason for anyone following our label to believe could conceivably happen in the future. These ideas are likely either based upon a closed-minded notion of what you think punk should look and sound like, or on an uninformed assessment of our label based on the fact that we've been able to successfully compete for attention with other bands and labels that are willing to be friendlier with the corporate system that we both disdain.

We have proudly been able to compete with more corporately connected bands and labels on our own terms while remaining independent.

Part of this includes us hiring a publicist at Girlie Action to help handle our press. You seem to have a fundamental misunderstanding of who they are and what they do. We hire a publicist at Girlie Action to solicit our music to mainstream outlets. She works for us, we don't work for her. Other people in her building may also take on more corporate clients, but Girlie Action are an independent company. This is no different than pressing our vinyl at an independent pressing plant which also takes on work from Warner Brothers and Sony. We only work with independent companies, and only work with companies that allow our artists to retain full control over their music and operations.

It might actually be you that should consider taking a closer and more critical look at how we run our label before being concerned about things that you imagine could possibly happen in the future.

—Joe Steinhardt

Dear *Maximum*,

I am a prisoner doing time in New Jersey. I am enclosing six stamps. Can you please send me a recent issue to the below address? Thank you very, very much. I look forward to reading about great (shitty) music I can't really hear due to the fact that I'm in a prison! Thank you for helping me out.

I love punk rock.

—Aaron Buxton

P.S. In addition, if anyone wants to write or just make fun of me…

Aaron Buxton #460159
Tully House
28 Peerless Place
Newark, NJ 07114

Thanks for your letter, Aaron! We put an issue in the mail to you. We get lots of requests from prisoners and we wish we were in a position to give out subscriptions for free to all incarcerated folks but we're practically reusing the stamps from our incoming mail to send the mags out. (Maybe anonymous '90s Punk can teach us a thing or two about that!) If anyone reading is interested in donating money to Maximum *for postage to send issues to prisoners who request them, get in touch: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.*

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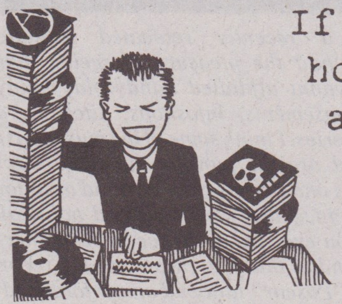

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COLUMNS

"As one we march thru the streets with the power of the sun
We'll put forth the boot as the opposition runs."
—YDL, "New Glory"

"Talk is cheap and violence is funny."
—Anti-Heros, "Criminal Mischief"

"...All I know is I go to all the trouble to put nails up all over the place
to keep the things organized, and now I can't find my goddamn shirt!"
—Skinner
(Patron Saint of the Gang)

First things first! The Gang and I got asked back. Ass back. We said sure. All chores were put on hold and we fired up the Acer. Some asshole tried to put a pirated copy of Photoshop on this thing and you can just hear it groan when it tries to load everything. We offer unpaid internships at Gang HQ. One of the positions is fanning the computer as if it were a little Caesar (Acer-Acer!) so it doesn't overheat. And the desktop on this thing! Jeezus. The whole damn thing is filled with icons. Give these bozos an inch and they'll fall asleep on it. The laziest. I think it's all this fukkin ska and reggae that's been on rotation at HQ. *Dance Craze* and *One Step Beyond*...Try getting any yard work accomplished while "Razor Blade Alley" is wafting through the air; this shit has gots to stop! I caught one of the Gang putzin around the mess hall with T-Rex arms skanking instead of peeling potatoes like he was charged to do! I think I smelled nag champa covering up some loud, too. Sha-nay-no my friend! Ranking full stop! Amendment 64 might have passed in Colorado but smoking that shit out in the open at HQ will quickly get you put on a night boat to Cairo.

The ska is fine, I guess. I was fourteen once. I had a MUSTARD PLUG T-shirt! I get it...ish. Nowadays if I wanna dance I put on something like 45 ADAPATORS. Their new six-song maxi-EP, *Patriots Not Fools* (vinyl out on Longshot Records and Contra Records, mp3s at their bandcamp) continues their A+ legacy of producing mod rock and r'n'b influenced Oi! (aka Oi'n'B). Pickabar, the vocalist, has one of the best voices in street-rock today. Fits the music spot on. The lyrical content is top-notch as well. The record kicks off with "Don't Grow Out Of It," a plea for skins to stay connected to the Brotherhood of the Boot. It echoes the sentiment put down so eloquently by a certain MR. BOB SEGER (a Gang favorite) in his classic sax-rock puncher, "Rock'n'Roll Never Forgets." The 45ADs run through "Vinyl Fetishists" (guess what that's about), "We Can Win" ("I can see that we're gonna win/ If we never consider surrenderin'/ I can see that we're gonna win"), and "Patriots Not Fools" ("Politcal parties are the rich man's tools/ No matter who wins, we lose"). Goodnight both sides! Oi! I voted this last November by screaming into a garbage can. Felt better than standing in line with all the angry white oldos. Also, back off on this guilt voting BS. Know what I *don't* do? Fukking go up to a complete stranger at the deli and try to talk politics. I'm there to get baloney and American cheese, lady. Cheezus! Anyway! The song, "Real Danger" touches on ego and fear and letting those things get in the way of being a productive human being. The record ends with "I'm Not Afraid" a tune about not playing into the culture of fear that is spread by the media and powers that be. ("Why are we so afraid?/ It's becuz they want us to be!")

Something I'm afraid of? Staring into the void and choosing to embrace it...*sike*! I do that shit daily! What else...I can't stop listening to the new NOi!SE LP, *The Scars We Hide*. This is out on GMM! Hailing from the fertile Oi! lands of Tacoma (it has an aroma!), NOi!SE are front runners in the ongoing melodic-Oi! (fake) sub-genre (YELLOW STITCHES, HOUNDS & HARLOTS, OLD FIRM CASUALS, SAINTS & SINNERS, LION'S LAW, MARABOOTS, MARCHING ORDERS, BISHOPS GREEN... and on.) There're a lot of bands playing this sort of bouncy, streetpunk/Oi! right now. And most are good. NOi!SE might be the best, tho. The dual vocals remind me of the BROADWAYS/LAWRENCE ARMS dynamic of Brendan Kelly and Chris McCaughan but not as juvenile. THOSE UNKNOWN, BELTONES and early RANCID also feel like apt points of reference regarding the whole package of sincere songwriting coupled with a dark, street-level rock'n'roll. This is catharsis (not the band...blech!). It's a going away rager. The last scene from *The Graduate*. Fulfilling an amends to a lost friend. One of the best albums this year. Real talk.

More real talk? The new split 7" from JENNY WOO and KLASSE KRIMINALE (on Randale Records) is collector schlock. Single-sided with a *very* nice etching on the reverse. Two versions of the same song: "Camallo." It's about Italian dock workers and borders on the class-consciousness-erotica that Oi! can fall into. KlassKrim's version is "punk" and Ms. Woo's is in line with her "acoustic-Oi!" sound. When I write "acoustic-Oi!" it makes me grit my teeth. What is "acoustic-Oi!"? Cuz it pretty much sounds like ERICA FREAS solo stuff. I guess ERICA FREAS is a skinhead? Wonder what her fans will think. Actually, this split is perfect for fans of RVIVR or other people who don't actually like Oi! But why would anyone buy this? You'd have to be a rube masquerading as an Oi! aficionado who was drawn in by the impressive etching on the back and was willing to pay close to 10 euros for it. I wasn't even drunk! The KLASSE KRIMINALE track is on their new record, *Rude Club* (gag me with a boot!). So what you are paying for is a one-song 7". Are there JENNY WOO completists out there? J-WOO put out an EP earlier this year, *Apart from the Crowd* (also on Randale), that has a fuller sound backed by snare and bass. It's a fine EP other than a regrettable cover of Lou Reed's "Vicious." Also, her voice sometimes drifts into a Mike Nessesque, punk*rawk*-sneer/drawl which is a bummer. You win some, you lose some. You're welcome, Randale.

Dear reader, do you like beer? Do you like songs about loving *and* hating work? Are you a skinhead who wants to

hear more song about getting into fights? Maybe you're a member of the Tea Party and you want to find some music that speaks to you? MURDERER'S ROW from Troy, New York could be a band you could love. Their newest record is *Liberty Denied: Working Class Crucified* (Riley Records) and it's maybe the most clichéd record of the year. I read a review over at Robert Collins' blog, Terminal Escape (terminalescape.blogspot.com) where he was talking about bands missing out on crucialness because of *when* they existed. MURDERER'S ROW has been cursed with producing music in the early 21st century instead of the late 20th. The music and lyrics on *Liberty Denied* echo most of what made Headache Records good: Work, beer, America, skinhead stuff. It's just been done over and over again. And there's nothing exciting or exceptional about MURDERER'S ROW that pulls them out of the used bin. The tunes on this album are slower and less hardcore than their previous output and are more driven by straight rock'n'roll which is a good thing, though there are touches of metal ("Slum Nation" and "Give the Pain"). A few cuts are good: "Looking for Aggro" and "Our Struggle" have an almost bovver-boogie, Oz-rock sound that I like. "White Collar Crime" has a catchy melody and satisfying rhyming couplets ("Why should I try to plead my case/ They don't listen they never learn/ All I want outta this short life/ Is to earn my keep/ And keep what I earn") that brings to mind better PATRIOT songs. Though, mostly what has happened when I've listened to *Liberty Denied: Working Class Crucified*, is that I've turned it off and put on NIBLICK HENBANE, or HEADWOUND, or WRETCHED ONES.

I've got a back-log of Oi! that I'm dying to talk about but I'm running outta space. Real quick: Go listen to LAST CRUSADE over at their bandcamp (lastcrusade.bandcamp.com). Print is slow, and they just dropped their demo a few weeks ago in November. It's killer brickwall Oi! with ringing guitars and gravel vocals. Just tops. Aight. That's it you bozos!

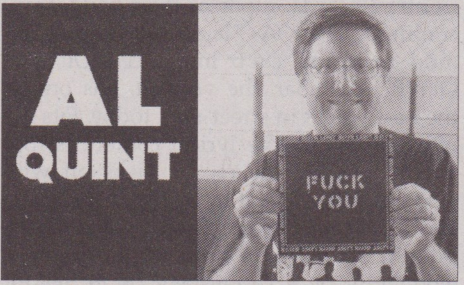
ENDNOTES:

1) It's hard to keep up with all the Oi!, skinhead / thug / hools-rock, yob-pop, rac'n'roll, streetpunk, bovver-boogie that gets released. Most everything the Gang and I buy or listen to gets covered by the fine folks over at American-Oi.com. Go hit up their site and marvel at how up-to-date it is. You can read a short interview with LAST CRUSADE there. Totes amazed.

2) Winter rules here in Pittsburgh. Snow outside means Viking rock inside. KALEVALAN VIIKINGIT and ULTIMA THULE are on repeat in the Captain's Quarters (my room). The cat, Li'l Bit gets renamed, Trjegul. Work slows down and the winter D&D campaign starts up. Many thanks, Wotan!

3) Send us shit to listen to! Want your demo or record reviewed? We (myself, the Gang, Trjegul) want to hear new bands that are putting out Oi! and/or skinhead related music. Hit us up at AmericanBootGang@gmail.com. Feedback is endured.

4) Hope you blockheads had a happy new year! I was probably (it has not come to pass yet) in Denver watching ITCHY-O and getting weird, while persevering through the hippie-heathens, or I saw SLIM CESSNA and was acting cool while tolerating the alt-country hipster horde. And remember, burnt (black) toast is really good for a bad hangover. Degenerates.



ESCAPE FROM JINGLE BELL HELL

The holiday season will be over by the time this issue drops—now *there's* a lame expression. Drops? An acquaintance of mine was talking about how sick he is of the term "curate," which is used, among other things, to describe assembling a lineup for a music festival. So pretentious, so annoying. "Drop" is another one, when used to describe the pending release of a single or album. It's usually used in the various press releases that clog my email inbox or by various hack music writers. Sorry—you're not cool. You're an idiot. Stop pretending you're anything else.

But, yeah, Jingle Bell Hell. I'm in the midst of it at the moment. An endless barrage of "Jingle Bells," "Winter Wonderland," "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas," "The Christmas Song," "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," the PHIL SPECTOR holiday album. Sorry, I've never liked that "Wall of Sound" nonsense. It made the RAMONES' *End of the Century* their first partially-crappy album. Does the world really need yet another version of those hoary "chestnuts." Visions of roasting the program directors at the various radio shows who "flip" to an all-holiday format in early-to-mid November dance in my head! I really got burned out on that shit when working in music retail. Not that all holiday music sucks—CHUCK BERRY's "Run Rudolph Run" and the SONICS' "Don't Believe in Christmas" are great and not nearly as overplayed. And, of course, there's FEAR's "Fuck Christmas." I do manage to avoid my exposure to it, by not listening to the radio that much at home—and thank fucking god for the noise-canceling headphones I use at the gym.

I'm flip-flopping the usual format of this column, leaving the non-musical musings for the end and starting with an extensive review section, whittling down the neglected review pile. And enjoying it a hell of a lot more than any holiday music I'm subjected to.

100% scabrous, nasty, don't give a fuck Clevo hardcore punk—that's what you get from the INMATES, and they've got it nailed. They've been kicking this shit around off and on since the '90s and their new self-tiled 12" on Painkiller is their first 12" since 2002 and first record since 2008. The "bye-bye" at the end of "Little Bitch" and 1-2-3-4 cowbell clang at the start of "Pintar El Mundo Oro" ("sung" in Albanian, allegedly) give away some of the inspiration (GISM and RAW POWER) and you certainly hear raw Japanese and Italian hardcore in their sound. The fake ad that introduces "Crustdust" might be one of the funniest things I've heard on a record in a while—as someone I know said, the Inmates' drummer Wedge might have a future as a radio announcer. You can probably guess who the target is on that song, with Paul exhorting *"If this is punk, I'm not punk / I want no association, I'm handing in my resignation."* No, this *is* punk, born of anger and, well, not giving a fuck what anyone thinks. A buzzbomb delivered with one hell of a prickly attitude. They even cover Joe Dolce's "Shaddup You Face"—sort of. (painkillerrecords.com)

Austin band BREAKOUT's second 7" of the year (following *Razorwire*, which came out last spring) is *True Crime* and it's an interesting combination of punk and nervier rock—the loping bass-line and sturdy rhythm of the opening title track give off an almost Pixies-ish vibe and the brief "No Sooner Said Than Done" has a similar feel. Kyle's hoarse vocals provide a counterpoint to the band's instrumental adeptness. Guitar with melody and burn fused to a fired-up bass/drums tandem. Far from anything generic. (Grave Mistake, gravemistakerecords.com)

GLUE are also from Austin and their new, self-titled EP cleans the sonics a little from their demo but it puts their strengths into clear focus and that's floorpunching, slammin' fodder that connects like a slug to the gut. Not tough-guy moshcore—the songs have catchy elements and the guitar playing has an arsenal of crunch, texture and string-sputter. Vocalist Harris Greenwood likes to punctuate his harsh vocals with plenty of RRRARFFS (I think that's how you spell it) and, with hardcore this ass-kicking, it makes sense. (Katorga

Works, katorgaworks.bigcartel.com; Video Disease, videodiseaserecords.com)

Peter Hoeren's Crucial Response label is still going strong after 25-plus years and his two latest releases are LPs from MANLIFTINGBANNER and SEX DRIVE. MANLIFTINGBANNER's first album in almost 20 years, *Red Fury*, hammers out intense political punk and hardcore with a strong (as you'd imagine) message and the songs are a mix of aggressive thrash and more tuneful moments, interspersed with sound clips. One is from Frank Sinatra and one of the stickers that comes with the disc quotes him as saying "Let's not forget we are all foreigners." Quite timely given Obama's executive order on immigration. I wonder what Ol' Blue Eyes would have to say about that, given that he became a Republican later in life. The tuneful element appears most prominently for "Riding High," with ex-EXPLOITED guitarist Big John and the rousing "(Just Another) Union Song." With conservatism on the rise, especially in this damned country, it's high time for some good old socialist punk. Pressed, of course, on red vinyl. Glad to have 'em back.

SEX DRIVE'S self-titled album features aggressive old-school hardcore (more late '80s NYHC, without the chug) with a thrash-driven emphasis although there are a few floor-pounders along the way, as well. A beefy guitar sound, with some heady pyrotechnics for the final song, "Bag of Hammers." Standard-issue 'core but with energy and venom to spare (crucialresponse.com)

Defective is the vinyl debut by Philly band the BROOD, following one of 2013's best demos. This 7" features rampaging hardcore with shit-hot riffing and a sound wedged comfortably in between Swedish hardcore and POISON IDEA-inspired pillage. People from LOST CAUSE, WITCH HUNT and lots of others, and vocalist Ned Wells has been fronting bands for over fifteen years, going back to his days in BALANCE OF TERROR. He sounds as pissed off as ever—expressing the frustration of a soul-sucking existence, to simplify things—and he's complemented by occasional lead vocals from bass player Janine. The four songs here come at you non-stop and the people in this band certainly know what they're doing by now. (5032 Florence Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143, filthybrood.blogspot.com)

For something somewhat different, GLITTER's self-titled 12" is a gnashing joy—braying, ranting, abrasive vocals that you have no hope of making out, along with a trebly sound that has punk, garage, and post-punk elements. Jabbing guitar that also incorporates a glowing sort of feedback, accompanied by lowdown bass-lines and thudding drums. They keep it stripped down to the essence. This Calgary band were a pleasant surprise when I saw them on a bill with BORN WRONG and FLYKILLS over the summer. A trip into darker regions. (Pee Blood, peeblood.bandcamp.com, peeblood@gmail.com)

MAD DOG is a new band with Garrett McGrath, vocalist of the late, great NOMOS. On their demo tape, you'll find pounding, mid-tempo punk à la early FUCKED UP. Bellicose vocals and bright riffs and while some of the lyrics exude personal turmoil, it's not always so serious, as with their street punk-tinged theme song (*"We party all night / we live the life / we are MAD DOG).* When referring to another band, someone once told me, "They play at one tempo, but they play it well." That's the case here. (maddogpunk.bandcamp.com)

SLUMS OF THE FUTURE's demo displays noisy, thrashing hardcore that stops, starts and squeals with torrents of feedback, coming to a head for the lurching closer, "Build and Kill." Lyrical cynicism to the point of being fed up enough that it's desensitized them into not being able to "empathize with the misery I see in other people," as is stated on "Systematic Failure." That's kind of sad although, admittedly, it's easy to just throw one's hands up at what's going on you. That said, this San Diego band tears into their songs full-tilt and full-speed a good amount of the time. (Compressed Thought, compressedthought.bandcamp.com)

Norwegian band URBANOIA favor pure thrashy hardcore on their *Psykisk Terror* EP. Four rippers that, to be honest, don't bring anything new to the sound, but just provide a good ol' fashioned throttle session. No heavy distortion, just ravaging guitar riffs and straight-ahead drumming that successfully mine the classic Scandinavian style. (Solar Funeral, solar-funeral.org; D-Takt & Råpunk, dbeatrawpunk.blogspot.com)

Speaking of Scandi-core, there's a shredder of a split 7" from Swedish hardcore ragers RAJOITUS and Providence, RI band RATSTAB, who make their own hard-hitting racket. RAJOITUS started in the early '90s and were on hiatus until recently. They've reconvened with a revamped lineup and tear through their five tracks with a focused fury. RATSTAB play in a slightly noisier and more chaotic vein. There's something of a SIEGE influence in their sound and a few Swedish nods. (Patac/multi-label, patacrecords.com)

And finally, there's the new two song flexi from the longtime Czech Republic band SEE YOU IN HELL, their first since 2010. Blazing Japanese-inspired hardcore, one fast, one a mid-tempo pace and pushing all the right buttons. Flexis need to be handled with care, of course, but the sound quality is fine and it comes packaged in a heavy stock cover with a foldout insert with flyers from shows they've played all over the world. Long may they rage. (seeyouinhell.cz)

A PARALLEL UNIVERSE...

On to the not-so-fun stuff—in brief. I can't let this month's installment pass without reference to the systematic murder of people of color by white police officers. It's nothing new and that simplifies things but the list is growing and recent high-profile cases have been getting mainstream coverage and people are getting out and protesting all over the country. The non-indictments of Darren Wilson for the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO and the choking death of Eric Garner by Daniel Pantaleo in Staten Island, even though the latter was captured on video; the shooting of twelve-year-old Tamir Rice by Timothy Loehmann after he was spotted at a playground with a toy gun; the shooting of Oscar Grant by a cop at Fruitvale Station in Oakland some years back. (By the way, the film *Fruitvale Station,* a dramatization of the last year of Grant's life, is well-worth seeing.)

Parallel universe? It boils down to responses along racial lines, a lot of the time. I just saw a cartoon by Ann Telnaes that shows a person wearing a shirt that says "Black America" holding up a sign that says "I Can't Breathe" (Eric Garner's last words) and a person wearing a "White America" shirt with a sign that says "I Can't See." Non-whites seeing these incidents for what they are—murder and the cops getting away with it. Some white people see black thugs getting what they deserved. They lump in all protesters with the handful of so-called looters. Then there are people complaining about being inconvenienced on their way home from work. One of my close friends, who tends to be progressive on most issues, said something along those lines and another friend of hers spewed the tired trope that, if they hadn't committed crimes, they'd still be alive. It should be noted that her friend's husband is a cop so I'm definitely considering the source.

#BlackLivesMatter has become a rallying cry but there's also the retort #WhiteLivesMatter. Every time I see Rudy Giuliani crawl out from under his rock and spew his racist bullshit about how white cops wouldn't be there if blacks weren't killing each other, I wish a large, heavy object would fall on him. He turned NYC into a police state and this is the end result—a black man allegedly selling loose cigarettes was set upon like he's a major criminal. NY Rep. Peter King, one of the biggest assholes in Congress (and there are many) said that if Garner hadn't been obese, maybe he would have survived. A large, heavy object for him, as well!

I know I shouldn't paint with such a broad brush. There are white people involved in the protests who empathize and are outraged at systematic police abuse of people of color. I'm one of those, I suppose—a middle-aged, middle-class white male who has what many refer to as "white privilege." Of course, if you listen to Bill O'Reilly, you'd be told such a thing doesn't exist. Such bullshit. I also know that, even though I empathize, I'll never know what it's like to walk in a non-white person's shoes and deal with what they have to. That's not white, liberal guilt, it's just stating facts.

I might have told this story before but I got pulled over by a state cop a few years ago for having a taillight out. It turned into a fishing expedition as he was snooping around the inside of my car. As it turned out, my license had expired a few months before but I didn't know that, since they don't send out reminders anymore. He did have my car towed and I had to get home on my own but I wasn't arrested, even though I could have been. He gave me a summons and, since I have no record, it got thrown out. But I know there's a damned good chance that if I was a person of color, I wouldn't have been as lucky.

The great columnist Charlie Pierce (his political blog on Esquire.com is must-reading) has a sarcastic phrase that things aren't About Race because they're never About Race. He doesn't believe that, of course, but making white people and the handful of black conservatives that you see on the teevee believe that is always an uphill battle.

I know what I've written isn't subtle or particularly nuanced and some might perceive it as self-righteous pontificating. There might be an element of truth in that. In the meantime, Happy New Year, everyone.

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This month I had a nice email exchange with the happy-go-lucky members of the band Mystic Inane, from New Orleans. Middle America seems to be blowing up these days, at least from the perspective of a French guy who gets most of his news from fanzines, message boards, and our local distributors of international noise, Mutant Records and La Luttine (more on both one of these days). If you're into music that's not into you and you haven't heard the Mystic Inane 7", you should check it out. The title song, "Deep Creep", reminds me of a cover we used to play with a band called Otaku Party. It was called "Torture," originally by Rapt, the French answer to Lärm in the '80s. Well, "Deep Creep" has the same noisy, hellish, repetitive out-of-tune guitar, and the singer sounds like he's crawling in bed with bugs, and enjoying the shit out of it. The last song, "I Believe in UFOs," sounds more post-punkish—it's got the kinda vibe heard on the darkest Good Throb tunes, the same kind of imaginative riffs, but more creepy. No Trend/Drunks With Guns fans, pay attention. Questions were answered by Jonah Emmanuel Kunt (vocals), Candice Charge (guitar) and Nathan Crime Wave Cassiani (bass). Perry Cleansing Rain Hohlstein (drums) was too busy eating shrimp po' boy.

So who's the #1 creep in the band, and what did they do to deserve that title?

Jonah: I self-identify as a creep...I spend days alone in my room slinking around to the same Bo Diddley tape, neglecting to take my dog for walks because I don't want to take off my sweatpants but am too vain to leave the house not in jeans...I pee in jars; I mutter under my breath, I like ashtrays more than houseplants...I don't know about the others in the band's habits, that would be an invasion of their privacy.

Are there a lot of creeps in New Orleans? Tell us about your daily life there, and how it relates to Mystic Inane's own brand of über positive, feel-good hardcore

Jonah: There are a lot of creeps in New Orleans, but not the kind I like; more and more people leaving the house in yoga pants and less and less hostile goons saying hello...There's a person I see every day who is not a creep and in fact a gentleman who none the less makes me feel like I live in hell. He has no legs. He has a horn or a growth on the top of his head, he has hands that feel like granite...He calls me brother man...I don't know if he would relate to our songs though.

Who was in Necro Hippies? How would you say the two bands differ sonically?

Jonah: Only Candice was in Necro Hippies. There was an early version of Mystic Inane that had Necro Hippies' singer Phil, Drew who's now in Ukiah Drag, and Andy from Thou...Candice will fire bands according to slight whims...Total Ginn worship, she makes me do pushups.

Who's running Negative Jazz Records and what do you have to say about them?

Jonah: A fellow none of us have ever met named Marcus runs Negative Jazz. He lives in Whittier, CA. He has an impeccable track record. I like to imagine him working at a Quiznos or a dog grooming facility in a strip mall.

I'm not sure what I see on the back cover of your 7"—can you tell me? Three pigs, a punk jacket, maybe? Who did it, and why did you choose them for it? Is it a friend who was gonna play in the band but then you realized you didn't need a xylophone?

Jonah: Our drummer Perry drew the back cover. The things you see in it, I see as well. But why is the grim form smiling? Would the grim form look cool in the punk jacket? And would the pigs give an honest critique if the grim form had the guts to try on the punk jacket?

I see you recently went on a Midwest tour, any good stories? Best/worst bands/venues you played with/at?

Jonah: We left New Orleans in the dead of summer. My room was overwhelmed with mold spores that smelled of gloom, regret, and despair. I was looking forward to the clean prairie air to say the least. In New Orleans we don't have basements, because of flooding, and I had forgotten that Midwest basements smell like my room. A friend had thought it would be charming to leave exotic fruit for me to come back to, but got the return date wrong, so my bed was covered in saprogenic alien fruit and I threw my bed away and slept on a smelly floor when I got home...Is that ironic? I dunno...

I had a nice time. Martin from Lumpo and the Dumpos made a poignant statement by spray-painting the crowd's faces in St Louis; those kids from Nerv have their chops down. Those kids in Wild Child have their chops down.

I just realized that Deep Creep's the name of some kind of cleaning product—"an excellent lubricant, cleaner and moisture controller, it's an excellent choice for cleaning air tools." Is that where the name of the 7" comes from, like Black Flag with the insect repellent?

Candace: Deep Creep was a title from Phil, the vocalist of the original lineup. We kept the name for that song because it was so fitting. There was a local band named after that song for about five minutes. I think there is another US band named Deep Creep now. It's "creeping" into the collective conscious.

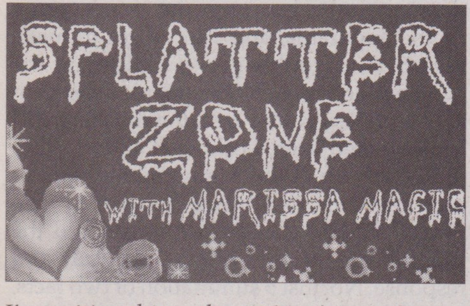
Your singer is the doppelganger of a friend of mine, whose nickname is "L'Aigle Noir," which means "The Black Eagle." For that reason, your band is pretty famous in Lyon, where I live. It should also be noted that L'Aigle Noir also sings in a band. Isn't life insane?

Nathan: L'Aigle Noir is also the name of a leather/bear bar in Montreal. They don't allow women in there. Isn't that insane? Why would they want to go in there anyway? Jonah is definitely not a bear, and he gave his leather jacket away.

I personally don't like bands when they last too long. Any plans of quitting soon, or are you gonna try and release an LP?

Candace: We are putting out another 7" on Negative Jazz and then one on Spotted Race, the label run by the madman vocalist of Lumpy and the Dumpers. No LP plans, and we consistently discuss our eventual dissolution, although we would like to tour a few more times in the next year. We are touring up to New York's Alright in April, I guess it's a good excuse to hit the road again. We also discussed going to the West Coast, god knows why, and touring the Midwest again 'cause we all really enjoyed that. Fortunately for punks of your ilk, that would probably be about it for us. LPs, SchmelP's but maybe. MYSTERIOUS.

mysticinane.bandcamp.com

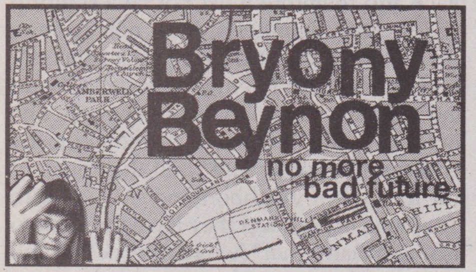


I'm writing this in the midst of an explosion of demonstrations reacting to the recent non-indictments in the murders of Eric Garner and Mike Brown. These non-indictments are only two stories of killer cops set free—I mention them specifically because they are the cases that the nation and the world is paying attention to currently, these are the cases that have drawn crowds into the streets as of late. I read news about them and a never-ending slew of others and I feel nauseous and helpless in the face of it. The fact that these are real occurrences and not anomalies but an overall systematic pattern is both disturbing and soul crushing. But when it starts to feel overwhelming, like too much and too impossible and too awful, I put down the paper and turn off the radio. I go to my room and draw and paint because it puts the anxiety and horror to bed, I can forget about the impossible world and drip into a bubble of crayons and paper. I stay in my room and eat a sandwich, draw some pictures, and turn my back on the world. Sometimes when I leave my house I might have randoms yelling their opinions about my body at me but I'm not going to be murdered by a cop for no reason. I can block that reality out, it's a reality I have the privilege to ignore.

I haven't been to any demonstrations yet. I could reel off a list of excuses but they don't matter. I stay in my room—I have kind of this weird enclosed bed in my room, kind of a sensory deprivation corner. It was built by the person who lived in the room before me. I've been spending the majority of my time in it lately, I've got a hiding place, a space to shut out the world. So I haven't gone to a protest yet this round, I just stay in my hiding place. When and if I do go to one then I may be faced with the possibility of getting arrested or beat up by a cop or tear gassed and if and when that possibility presents itself I can always leave and go home. This is not to say that police violence is acceptable at a protest or at anytime, it's just to note the fact that for me (being white) I have to go somewhere specific and participate in something specific to put myself in that line of danger in the first place. In truth the majority of times I've been fucked with by authority figures boil down to two things: when I was a teenager and times that I have looked like my trash bag self in places that are not trash bag friendly. But I grew out of being a teenager and it's pretty easy to change my clothes and get my hair back into the Clairol range. These things mean little to nothing. I thought about not even writing about these current events because I didn't want to be another white voice dominating the conversation but it seems worse to say nothing. What I'm ham handedly digging at here is that I have this forum regardless and I don't want to be silent in the face of these atrocities and to reiterate that they are not anomalies. These things need to be repeated and remembered.

In the Bay Area, specifically Oakland and Berkeley, these protests have lead to the shutdown of freeways, BART, and Amtrak so far. It is undeniably inspirational. There has been property damage—which of course is being equated with violence but, you know, windows still don't have feelings and equating violence with property damage really demonstrates how much buildings and stuff are valued over actual lives. Success and worth are so deeply tied to materialism at this juncture that it seems a business owner with a broken window somehow deserves more sympathy and respect than an unarmed black boy being murdered. Media continues to reinforce this, taking the route of sexy sensationalism focusing on property damage and effectively taking the conversation away from the staggering numbers of black bodies being systematically brutalized, murdered and incarcerated. And I wish that when people saw a window being broken or found themselves stuck on a shutdown freeway instead of blaming it on "thugs," they thought about why these "thugs" are breaking a window or blocking a freeway; instead of being pissed about an inconvenience, thinking about why that inconvenience is being created. And seriously, your commute was a little longer but you weren't murdered in broad daylight and then left in the street for over four hours.

And then there are the cops, let's not forget the cops. Boys in blue just doing their jobs and keeping the people safe. Last night in Oakland two undercover cops were discovered and called out at which point they pulled their guns, pointing them at the unarmed crowd and arresting people without ever showing a badge. These guys have guns and power and the state on their side. They are imbued with the mantra "to serve and protect" and filled with the conflation of property and person, and that destroyed property is on par with the bodily destruction of an actual person. It seems like there is a lot of lip service to wanting cops to be safe. To note a specific case, the cop who murdered Mike Brown (I will not repeat his name) claimed that he feared for his life, so it was okay to kill an unarmed black boy. The cop just wants to get safely home to their family, but doesn't everybody? If the cop's whole supposed job is to keep the public safe shouldn't the cop's life be last priority? The captain goes down with the ship? The cop goes down with the ship, the cop works to preserve every life, to make sure everyone is safe and okay, before that cop gets to ensure that he is safe and ok, right? But no, cops have families (and no one else does) and they just want to get home safe (and no one else does) after doing their "jobs" and they (cops) are people whose lives matter and it's okay for them to murder someone for little to nothing because that someone possibly was selling loose cigarettes and happens to be black and therefore must not be a standup citizen and definitely does not have a family they are just trying to get home to. And for the cops having power and a gun and zero accountability is not enough. The local forces are militarized as another tactic to "keep the public safe" and they need to roll through a neighborhood in a tank to "maintain order" and they have the right to use "less than lethal" (what the fuck?) ammo to "keep the peace." The cops are given war toys and then told the enemy are people of color and those with little to no property, that these people are de facto a threat and worthless and disposable. It seems tiresome to repeat this because it seems obvious that all of that is so backwards and double speak and deeply fucked, and then I read some poll in some newspaper saying that the majority of white Americans feel that justice was served in the Eric Garner and Mike Brown cases and that race had no influence on the outcomes. AAAAAHHHHHHHH. AAAHHHHHHH.



The protests have been steady for about a week now and on social media there has been a steady stream of essays and blogs outlining ways to be a white ally and to not make these protests about you. As a white person figuring out how to be an ally, how to not make everything about you is obviously incredibly important. To figure out how to be present at a protest to swell the numbers but stand back and not make yourself the face of the protest. Maybe don't chant the things that don't apply to you and will never apply to you—at the very least think about what you are saying. Does it help, as a white person, for you to chant "I can't breathe"? Also replacing "black lives matter" with "all lives matter"? For fucking real? That's some "Oh! Oh! Me too!" bullshit. During the Occupy protests, there was one march I found myself in where a majority white crowd marched into West Oakland chanting "I am Oscar Grant, shoot me in the back" at which point I subtly walked backwards and peaced the fuck out. Should I have called out my fellow white protesters to, at the very least, think twice about what they were doing? Totally. It didn't even cross my mind then. And now as I sit in my room writing this I am fully aware that if I was in a similar situation now I would do the same thing I did then, peace the fuck out without saying a word. No excuses, it's shitty. It's important to think about things, about what you are doing, what you are saying. And if the burning need to speak cannot be stopped, then use your voice to repeat the stories, and repeat the names. These suggestions I'm doling out aren't birthed from my brain. Look up "how to be a white ally" or read some of the many open letters and essays making rounds on social media and the internet in general. Research never hurts.

A short but necessary dispatch this month.

On a Saturday afternoon in October, I attend the United Friends and Family Campaign annual march in central London. This is a coalition of the families and friends of those who have died at the hands of the state, either following police custody or in mental health facilities. They hold an annual silent march from Trafalgar Square to 10 Downing Street, followed by a (not silent) rally which mourns their losses and updates attendees on their long, usually underreported, always unbearably slow campaigns for some semblance of justice.

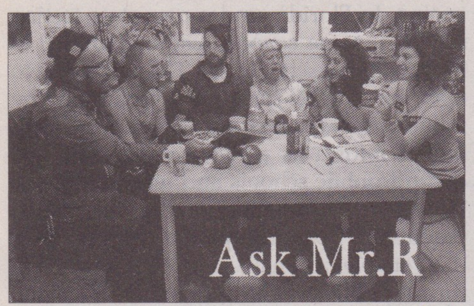
There is a small crowd of less than 100 people. We walk halfway down Whitehall, then assemble to hear the bereaved. Every stage of grief is represented. The names are read out. The banners seem to radiate anger. Remember. Justice. Words. Turns are taken, background stories and reprehensible circumstances repeated for those not familiar. The last moments, the cover-ups (always cover-ups), cases hinging on tiny details, always one thing in common—vulnerable people whose lives were deemed expendable. The ignominious post-death scramble by authorities to distance, to clean up. The Independent Police Complaints Commission, the first port of call, a panel sat on by, who else, but current and former police. Hollow laughter. Naked cruelty. Our feet feel heavy. I think about what it means to go on with your life when the state has killed a member of your family. When that sentence, even, works to erase the cold fact that it is people who kill other people, and systems protect those who kill and are enabled to do so, and casually toss aside the other kind of person. Not only people of color, although they are disproportionately represented, but every ethnicity of. A parallel pattern of schizophrenia and other mental illnesses being interpreted as "violent and dangerous" emerges.

Carole Duggan is here. The aunt of Mark Duggan, whose shooting at the hands of police in Tottenham in 2011 sparked riots across London and other parts of the UK, Carole's voice is hardened and reasoned and very, very angry. She speaks with incredible, cold and clear-eyed fury about how the media circus around her nephew's death has diminished their family's chance of justice even further. A jury found that Mark was unarmed at the time of his murder. A jury found a verdict of "lawful killing." Next, a victim's grandmother takes the platform. Her gleaming voice rings out despite the rickety PA. "I will not stop fighting until I am dead. But there should be thousands of us here, every week, every day." The weak afternoon sun reflects off golden embroidery thread in meticulously sewn banners. Names upon names upon names. Remember Jimmy Mubenga. Sean Rigg. Smiley Culture. Harry Stanley. Names become banners. Become the families they left behind. Their memories lost in procedural papers, appeals upon appeals, broken promises, investigations, and the final insult "lessons learnt."

A few degrees colder, a month later. The American Embassy, Grosvenor Square. It's just after nightfall and the outside of a department store has begun propelling fake snow down on shoppers. We weave between them and reach the square. I remember suddenly my mother's stories of the Vietnam protests here in 1968. Across the darkness of the locked square gardens, leafless branches of tended trees mingle with a cordite haze of red smoke from flares. And people. So many people. Heads bobbing above the ever so tidy topiary. Banners have different names now, newer slogans imported from across the pond. Black lives matter, Hands up don't shoot. Mike Brown, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin. I am surrounded by school-age Black and Asian teenagers with candles, students, and very few police. The protest has been called only a few days prior by a newish group called London Black Revolutionaries. Makeshift platforms rise up in the shadow of a frozen eagle atop the embassy. You cannot see its eyes. Carole is here again.

Someone invokes the words of Mario Savio: "There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part. You can't even passively take part! And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels…upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop! And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all."

The refrain at the beginning and end of each speech is, as always, "No justice / no peace." I had never before considered the implications of this phrase, the call and response. Not just a summation of two facts, but an exchange, a demand, a warning, a threat. Suddenly the whole crowd is moving. It's tentative at first. We're in the heart of millionaire abodes, only streets away from the one of the busiest shopping districts in the world. And yet as we start to weave through the slow moving (this is central London) traffic, walking against the flow, bodies upon metal, early Christmas lights illuminating banners, bus drivers honk their horns, poking clenched fists from windows, and shoppers are walking alongside the crowd now, the refrains are louder, more pointed: "What will be the death of me? White, white supremacy." No one knows where the crowd is headed. In the knowledge that an unplanned march means an easily enforceable kettle in these narrow streets, there is no obvious property damage, just one very skillful person ducking ahead to spray "Justice for Michael Brown" on a series of old white stone government buildings. The incongruity is like a poem. It will be gone tomorrow. I keep Mario's machine in mind as my burning feet head for the night bus and think about our relative parts in it, always with the sneaking fear that the man with his hands on its levers sees bodies thrown upon gears only as extra grease.



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. (..and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by the subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx'.")*

Save this number to your phone for all your advice needs on the go! I know you wish you could just Facebook everything always, but you can text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357 [Se habla brb lol jk wtf ftw rofl lmao, etc.]) or go way back in time to, like, 2003 when people sent emails: askmrr@mail.com.

I'm 50 and wondering if it's cool to just show up to Northwest Indiana (NWI) and Chicago house shows? I don't know anyone in the scene.

Okay, so I'm assuming that this question is one being raised based on your being a fifty-year-old punk going to shows, and not being just a new person in town who is nervous about solo show-going, so I'll answer with that in mind. I asked some friends-of-friends Chicago punks what the scene is like and how it breaks down, age-wise, at house shows and in NWI, just so I could offer a little factual information along with my opinion, and, obviously, I got a lot of mixed responses. Basically, people say that the scene is predominantly of the age range 25 to 38, but always with younger and older people attending comfortably as well. Some shows are on the older side and some shows on the younger.

And I know I haven't been everywhere, but I'm pretty sure this is what it's like *everywhere*, so I kind of don't know what I expected. I was also told that the NWI crowd is generally very young, and that might feel weird just by default, but everywhere else in Chicago proper is regular. The *opinion* part of this answer is that I think all punks should feel welcome at all punk shows. I mean, as long as they're not creeps they should be made to feel welcome at all punk shows anyway.

A thing that is always an issue scene-to-scene is where to have all-ages shows. "All-ages" gets discussed a lot, and it's mainly focused on younger kids, which makes obvious sense because they are the ones being turned away at bars and clubs and things, but the reason it matters and we try to find and utilize spaces where we know everybody who wants to see the bands can actually see them, is because we want "all ages" to be able to participate in whatever the fuck this thing is that we're doing. We're definitely for sure not protecting the younger generation from alcohol or drinking culture. We want punks to be able to benefit from knowing each other and participating in whatever kind of community might be available in their town. And I know that is kind of idealized, and that not everyone in the world gets away with feeling as much community connection bullshit as I do, so if this wasn't an age question and was just a question about solo show-going nervousness, I would just say: Always go to the show anyway. Home Sweet House Show.

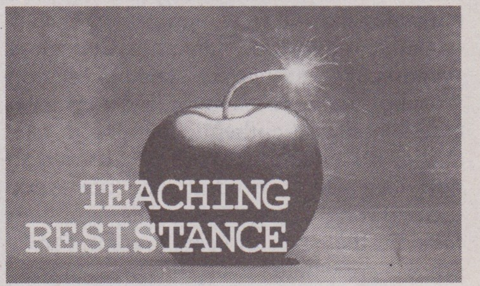
Does my punk membership expire if I don't go to shows? What if I don't care about any local bands anymore? And whose fault is *that*—are they getting worse or am I just a dick? Am I supposed to experiment? You know, take a chance on a show with zero bands I've ever heard of? Or just stay in my room and piss off my friends with my absence? Halp!

I answered a similar question a couple of months ago, but with more of a focus on hating your friend's bands. This one is kind of a worse situation to be in in a lot of ways, because you have even less motivation to go to the shows to find out whether you're being a total dick, or whether every band is actually as terrible as you think they are. While both of those things are complete possibilities, honestly, you should probably come up with some way to pry yourself out of your room at least, like, a couple of times a month in order to go to a show with bands you don't know about, if for no other reason than you can confirm you're still totally right about the whole scene being crap, and you can go home feeling vindicated.

I wouldn't say force yourself if you have bad social anxiety or other reasons you actually might not wanna go out, but I don't think "possibly terrible" is a forever excuse. Take a break, but there are so many different levels of terrible, it's hard to believe you couldn't even find one that eventually appealed to you. Especially if your friends are apparently hanging out at these shows wondering where you are. Friends always make terrible seem pretty fun.

Oh, and if punk really did have membership cards, everyone's card woulda expired already. Like when you and your friends go to a show at Gilman for the first time in a couple years and everyone has to borrow the same guy's card over and over again in order to avoid paying the membership fee for themselves (just kidding, Gilman, *nobody* does that).

Until next month! I think I need to do a radio style fundraising drive, but for questions instead of money, and no one gets a tote bag or anything, but maybe they'll be able to get important information regarding the best possible place to invest their punk points for a larger punk point return before punk retirement. Punk. Text 510-585-HELP or send an email to askmrr@mail.com.



Punk and other misfit / outsider / radical cultures have always had a conflicted relationship with education and teaching. On one hand, school is an oppressive institution. It is a potentially dangerous environment that is legally forced upon us when we are kids and teenagers in the primary and secondary grades (elementary and high school). Then, when we finally finish (or escape) it as adults, we are societally pressured to progress into often-ruinously expensive higher education (college). On the other hand, education has also been used as an escape valve for countless people who are stuck in grim life situations otherwise, helping provide them with structure and intellectual skills that have the potential to improve their lives and those of others.

Though the institutions of education are historically problematic and often oppressive, students who have been through them as "outsiders" understand the importance of teachers who have developed radical notions of what education is and how it works. Sometimes, these students become teachers themselves, helping to subvert these educational institutions or find outside alternatives to them. It makes sense, given that much of punk embraces idealism, ethics, and intellectualism, that so many punks have become teachers while remaining punks. This column is designed to provide a platform for these radical, subversive teachers and educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education.

This month's column is concerned with the extremely important, often-misunderstood issues of corporate education "reform" and standardized testing. It is by Matt Meyer, who has been an educator for eleven years, lives in Oakland, California and teaches at Berkeley High School. He can be contacted directly at matt.meyer666@gmail.com.

As a teacher, I have a complicated relationship with school. When I was a teenager, school was where my friends and

I directed our rage. We felt trapped by its conformist values and forced socialization. I became a teacher because I wanted to empower kids to question and confront that same system. For the past eleven years I've been actively working toward creating a space where that critical engagement is possible, a journey that has become more difficult with the increasing push toward educational standardization.

Public education has always been a paradox. It's a system the state forces upon kids, but can leave room for transformative experiences and authentic learning to take shape. It's where kids can be exposed to new ideas, find an adult who can guide them through tough situations, and find passions that stick for years to come. Public schools are where kids spend most of their time, learning to analyze and question the world around them. These public schools are under attack by the same forces of capitalism that continue to commodify so many other aspects of our lives.

The assault on schools takes the form of the corporate education reform movement, which aims to destroy our public education system and therefore destroy our ability as teachers to empower youth to think critically. With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, the success of public schools has been quantified by unrealistic growth measures based on standardized test scores. Consequently, schools are punished based on those results. This legislation, however, was only the beginning of the corporate reform movement. Since taking office, President Obama has continued to support the movement, which is based on dismantling public school systems and replacing them with school vouchers, publicly-unaccountable charter schools, and curricula based on standardized tests.

The key assumption behind this movement is that schools should run like competitive markets. Schools compete with each other to attract students through their publicized standardized test scores. Then, by tying performance ratings to these test scores, teacher conformity is forced. Teachers, in order to keep their jobs, or, in extreme cases, keep their schools open, are pressured into teaching test-taking skills and rote memorization, forgoing critical thinking and social-emotional learning—skills that are untestable on a multiple choice exam. This "merit pay" system incentivizes competition over collaboration between teachers. Students are left with a substandard education where they are tested multiple times from elementary school all the way to high school graduation. The tests have been found to inaccurately measure the performance of a teacher despite the fact that her job may be on the line. Even worse, every day a student spends taking a test disconnected from what she is learning in class is a lost day of authentic experience.

Although they are funded by the privatization movement, the architects of the corporate reform movement use the language of the left to demonize public education. Corporate foundations masking as philanthropy organizations pretend to represent student interests. The biggest so-called philanthropists are the Broad Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Walton Foundation, of Wal-Mart fame. These reforms see education as a potential revenue stream. They fund electoral campaigns and sue states in order to pass market driven education models. For example, the recent court case, Vergara v. California, brought on by a group calling themselves, ironically, Students First, says that job protections for teachers are a violation of students' right to an education. This same organization funds right-wing politicians, while claiming it has the best interests of students in mind. The Vergara v. California lawsuit exemplifies how the corporate reform agenda blames teachers and teacher unions for all the problems of public schooling and ignores poverty, institutional racism, and decreasing school funding as reasons why kids don't succeed.

These organizations exploit the notion of the achievement gap to discredit public schools while refusing to take up the real problems in education. The charter school mantra of "school choice" ignores the institutional causes of education inequality. Furthermore, as due process rights of teachers and job protection decrease, teachers will be less able to have autonomy in the classroom and the chances of delivering a radical education will diminish. Schools will cease being a place where students learn new perspectives and ways of expressing themselves. The factory model of education, where teacher curriculum is prescribed and students are turned into data points, becomes the norm. Given the pay and the difficulty of the work, keeping good teachers is already difficult, but taking out the creativity and opportunity to impact student lives in a meaningful way further disincentivizes the profession for those of us who see education as a key place of raising consciousness for change.

In order to solve the problems that face schools, society has to change priorities and reallocate resources back into the commons. Instead, they are stripping what's left of our commons by setting up charter schools that are not held accountable to democratically elected school boards and measure success by "data." Because of this race toward turning our kids into data points, the public schools have had to respond with more testing. In Florida, under new state testing schemes, some schools test students 60 to 80 days of the school year. These changes to how we educate have been bankrolled by millionaires with a secret agenda, who fund school reform as a way to discredit and defund public schools and teacher unions. They play on the emotions of dissatisfied parents by passing parent trigger laws that enable a small group to effectively turn a public school into a charter school. These charter schools are, conveniently, not unionized, and teachers can be fired for any reason.

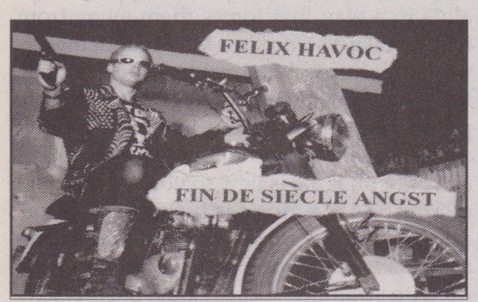
Additionally, many of these schools are controlled by private, unelected boards instead of democratically elected school boards. Some charter schools are even for-profit, actually making money from taxpayers. They seem to think creating schools that adhere to free market principles will improve education for all, although many of these schools kick out their most difficult students or don't admit high-needs students in the first place. The free market fails for schools just as it has failed many of our other institutions. Charter schools have not been found to perform any better than their public school counterparts, even though they claim that innovation and competition has led them to greater success.

The good news is that communities are fighting back. Teachers, students, and parents have had enough. Teachers at Garfield High School in Seattle, Washington boycotted their state tests. The book *More Than a Score*, edited by Jesse Hagopian, details this struggle amongst others against corporate education reform. Students are also resisting. They deliberately stay home on testing days or fill out an "opt-out" form. Some have even organized walk-outs. In Florida, parents are pushing back on state mandated tests. Even some school boards have started denying charters as they realize that their models do not serve kids.

As long as kids are forced to go to school, it is our collective responsibility to make sure that these schools meet their needs. Public education is not a business. It should not be run like one. Equity and opportunity should be at the forefront of our public education system, not profit incentive and competition. We need to support our schools and our kids by fighting back against standardized testing, opting out when possible, and putting pressure on schools to treat our children as whole beings that will excel when given the opportunity.

I am an activist, a punk, and an aspiring teacher. I am constantly searching for ideas/inspiration on how to radicalize and subvert teaching pedagogy (the science, art, and philosophy of

education) to better understand and elevate my students. As mentioned earlier, this column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory and community-based education. If you are a teacher for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), Community Colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com —John No, Teaching Resistance editor



Every year, Minneapolis hosts a music oriented film festival called Sound Unseen. Last year the festival featured a screening of the recent Bad Brains documentary, and this year we were treated to the Midwest premiere of *Salad Days*, a documentary about the DC hardcore scene by Scott Crawford. I am not sure what Scott has been up to, but I remember him selling his zine, *Metrozine*, outside the Wilson Center. He was really young and at the time I thought he might be the only kid going to shows there who was younger than me and my high school friends. This documentary was especially exciting for me, as I was a participant in the waning years of DC hardcore and have long been a champion of this very special time and place.

For my generation, Washington, DC in the early 1980s was the cauldron of an explosive and rebellious energy that came up from the streets. Hardcore punk and go-go were two musical genres that coalesced in DC, a town that lacked any of the "industry" trappings of New York or LA. People are still debating which was the first "hardcore" record or band. I think that hardcore was kind of an inevitable progression from punk and was bound to happen somewhere, if not several places at once. However, no one can deny that it was the Bad Brains who took the energy of punk rock to the *next level* with their speed and intensity and helped propel the hardcore movement. Most evidence points to the term "hardcore" punk originating in DC. It was used by the Georgetown punks to distance themselves from new wave poseur types. Likewise, it was Dischord who really laid the groundwork for the DIY ethos spreading it like a virus. And it was DC where the straightedge movement began. DC was also the birthplace of go-go, probably the most under-appreciated local musical genre and like hardcore punk, totally DIY and direct from the street.

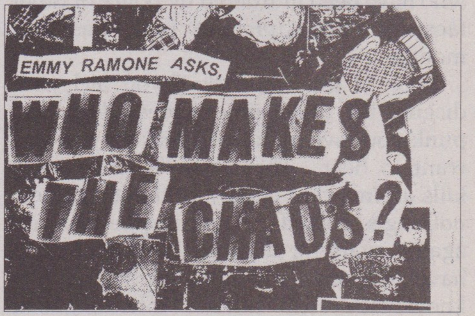
Salad Days covers the whole period from about 1979 up to the late '80s/early '90s alternative rock craze. There's some great footage, interviews with a really broad variety of people offering perspectives on all the major issues of the scene. My only complaint is that filmmakers feel the need to include non-DC celebrity commentators like Thurston Moore and J Mascis. These guys might be adored by rock critics, but they add very little to the narrative. And let's not forget, DC produced two of the most prolific music documentary commentators of all time: Ian MacKaye and Henry Rollins. The often-interviewed Dave Grohl at least was actually a part of the DC scene and pays it much respect.

DC in the '80s was a very special time and place and it has influenced a lot of people in different ways. Many people moved through the scene and took away different influences. I hated the direction that things went musically, so much so that I was eager to leave town to find another music scene with a more hardcore punk orientation. All that aside, this documentary is very well done and worth seeing for sure. According to kickstarter, another similar documentary is in the works, and I eagerly await that one. And if you have cable TV, Dave Grohl's HBO special was surprisingly well done, and is really exposing this scene to the mainstream—a few thousand people will see *Salad Days* and many millions are watching HBO. Twenty years ago, I predicted that in the future, cultural studies types would start analyzing '80s hardcore the way they were talking about Dada, Fluxus and the Beat poets in the '80s, and that one day hardcore records would hang in art galleries. This has now more or less come to pass with all the good and bad outcomes that go along with it. I, for one, welcome the scholarly attention, documentation, and recognition of something that was truly unique and creative. Its repercussions are still being felt in the enduring popularity of hardcore punk, the straightedge movement, and the DIY ethic, whilst many other youth "movements" have faded into obscurity.

I was pumped for the screening and really talked it up. My wife said, "You are always talking about DC in the '80s. How come no one is interviewing *you* for these documentaries?" The simple answer is that I was just a face in the crowd in those days. I didn't start going to hardcore shows until 1983, and by that time the heroic era of DC hardcore was drawing to a close. My only real involvement other than going to shows and buying records was in the early days of Positive Force. I also had a job in a copy shop and copied lots of zines and flyers for people. No one making a rock documentary hunts down the high school kid who had a job in a copy shop for their opinion. I didn't like the more reformist direction Positive Force went in after the first year or so and dropped out to find a more radical political group to hang around with. I didn't like the direction the scene went in musically after Revolution Summer and drifted into listening to European bands who were still playing fast and aggressive hardcore. Crossover, crust, and grind were just starting up around that time and had a lot more to offer to me than those proto emo and indie bands. I left DC a month before my nineteenth birthday and wound up in Minneapolis by accident.

That said, the DC hardcore scene was the formative environment for me. I had the feeling of being part of something different and very real. On the upside, there was the burst of creative energy, amazing music, and radical politics, and the electrifying feeling of being young and alive and part of it. On the down side, there was constant violence, from grits and bangers, police, and especially skinheads, as well as drug abuse and urban blight. Perhaps the intensity of bad only makes the good memories shine more brightly. In retrospect, spending time in jail or getting beat up by a gang of hooligans might have been worth it to be part of something that is still resonating with so many people.

I'm sick of things the way they are, it's about time that we had a change.



"SMASH TO FUCK THE FUCKING SYSTEM!"

It's hard to think about anything right now. Writing about punk feels so mundane and useless at times like this, and trying to reflect on our current situation has become increasingly difficult by the second. But I think it is important to work through such hard times the best we can, to not roll up and close our eyes. Doing my best to keep my brain together, to analyze my thoughts and feelings, stay productive in my thinking and actions, and keep listening to awesome punk. In this time we all have to fight their

wishes to dehumanize us, too, and look out for those around us who are being forced into dehumanization more than we are. So here we are, forced to live amongst these pigs. Our world is at war with theirs and they have proven willingness to fight for it. The time for us to start fighting back is long past but yet to be too late.

Whether you can, or should, call punk art or an art form is a whole other piece of writing and discussion to have. But for the sake of this one I am going to bluntly say I believe it to be and will refer to it as so. I believe punk to be a fantastic form of expressionist art. I define good punk music by how well the people who created it unleash their feelings and ideas, how convincingly, how raw, etc. I think the idea being expressed should be taken into consideration and absorbed when listening to punk music. The past few weeks a large part of the world has decided to un-squint their eyes and focus in on the disgusting system we all fit into somehow. This news is nothing new to the punk world, a world whose anger and protest has been let known loud and proud since day one. I don't want to ask you to care about the recent atrocities that have gone so widely public in the past few weeks, or to begin taking a stand. If you haven't done that by now you have already chosen to support the fucked up fucking system. I simply ask you to look at the message inside of punk, to look at the lives of Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Dymond Milburn, John Crawford, Cameron Tillman, Eric Garner, Alfred Wright, Lennon Lacy, and Aiyana Stanley-Jones. These are just some of the people who have been murdered by police or other facets of white supremacy in the past four months.

Look at that and ask if you feel your disgust for that being expressed—in the punk you love, punk you make, punk you want to hear. The lyrics "a stray bullet kills an innocent child / nothing's gained, nothing's solved" have inspired punks against wars for decades. Now you don't have to even look out your window to know "the system" has been intending their bullets for innocent children openly and unapologetically. I ask you as punks to go listen to the *Fight Back 7"* and listen to the words "SMASH TO FUCK THE FUCKING SYSTEM." If you agree with that feeling and sentiment, show it, live it. If you don't agree or understand why one would state such sentiments, drop out of punk. Buy a Dave Matthews CD, go to Buffalo Wild Wings with your dad, go listen to the "not racist" Skrewdriver records and walk in front of a fucking bus.

Cretins of Distortion #6 has been occupying a lot of my musical listening and reviewing time so I thought I would go back and discuss some records from earlier this year that I never got the chance to really blab about. It also gives me a chance to discuss some bands who have expressed themselves in a way I find productive and important. Few bands (if any) come to mind that have better expressed their feelings towards this fucked up system than DOWNTOWN BOYS. A band that pours their hearts, energy, and lives into fighting against the hegemonic world, all while remaining one of the most fun, angry, and all-out punk bands around. Their 7" from earlier this year proves that to a point I had doubted possible to show in a slab of plastic. They are a raw and aggressive punk band. Not a dance party, not a marching band, a punk band that is working to take their energy and disdain for the system and express it in a way that is fresh and exciting. They are a band that work to deny the dehumanizing tactics of those who claim power with all the energy and power humanly capable. Musically, they are driven by fast and simple riffs and slamming drums. That sound is then amplified and blown to pieces by raging horns. The vocals are screeched out with a pure aggression. It's truly puzzling to hear a punk singer in 2014 who seems more aggressive and angry than you've ever heard before, but DOWNTOWN BOYS has just that, one of the few punk bands who seem to have to adequately reacted to what the world has given us in the past year.

NO SIR, I WON'T is the closest thing we have to Crass Records in this new world. If you need to get your fix of CHUMBAWUMBA, POISON GIRLS, or FLUX OF PINK INDIANS-style punk, here it is. The band takes the style seriously and does it justice. They cover the harder-hitting lump-in-your-gut songs and then they have their peaceful anthems. On their new record *The Whole Fucking World is Shit!* they show their best effort at the peace punk sound yet. I personally prefer their more punk moments, like *The Door* LP, but I really appreciate the sound they took on this record. The addition of a second vocalist really helps deliver the longer, more complex messages of their lyrics. My favorite part of this record is how it flows; this type of songwriting can quickly become musically uninteresting. I mean, writing catchy and interesting punk songs that allow you to recite an essay's worth of lyrics can be incredible challenging and to see a band adequately take on such a challenge is really awesome. One can only shout "fuck war" over pogo-inducing drums so many times before the message gets muddy. NO SIR, I WONT not only realizes that, but they realize pogo-inducing drums are fucking sick and make it work. That is something to fucking hold onto.

Philadelphia band the STASI has taken a political message and decided to express their critique conceptually by addressing the relationship of state and individuals using the history of East Germany's secret police. On their recent tour they handed out flyers discussing their reasoning and objectives of their message. The band aims to address relationships with the state and explore perspectives of power dynamics in personal relationships using three angles: political, personal, and historical. Too many political messages are written tactlessly or reactionary and I find it refreshing and inspiring to see a band aim to keep a message alive in a way that forces them away from that, to take a stance in a way that demands you truly think about just how to articulate it, let alone its message. I find it extremely productive when a band makes you think about these ideas from a perspective that I can only imagine is new to you. To top it all off, the STASI's music is fucking awesome. A very UK82 inspired sound with an obvious love for the PARTISANS muddied up with straining vocals. Equal parts catchy and aggressive.

That's all I got this month, if you want to trade punk stuff for my fanzine *Cretins of Distortion* or tell me to go and fuck myself get in touch: emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com! Keep fighting punks.

As the snow continued to fall, silently blanketing our local ultra-fab dog run (our neighborhood, through no fault of or my neighbor's own, has become the hottest real estate in the world. Every one who is anyone who lived in Beverly Hills is now on my street or very nearby), I looked at Tim Yohannan's smile.

Yellow teeth, cigarette in hand, silly laugh. Yup, it was Tim!

"Tim, I…" I mumbled as Elena looked at me confused, and Rocket and Jett barked playfully at Tim, somehow sensing he was a good friend of mine.

Whether they knew he passed away about a decade and a half ago was beyond me.

"I know George," laughed Tim, "and what the fuck is this? You live with the movie stars now? 'Hollywood George' for real? I knew Fat Mike would end up like this, Brett and Dexter, too, but you?"

"My mom and Nick moved with me in 1988," I rapidly explained to Tim. "The

street was full of transvestite hookers and the mob dumping bodies across the street on the West Side Highway."

"It's called 'West Street' now, Hollywood, and actually, I'm just kidding with you. When are you ever going to be able to take a joke?" asked Tim.

"You know what Joe Queer said about me during that whole Lookout! Fiasco, I just don't want you to think…" I stammered.

"I don't have to think, George, I'm dead. And who is this lovely lady?" asked Tim as he stepped on his disgusting cigarette on the concrete of the dog run, and lit up another, unaware that dogs liked to play here and didn't need to be eating cigarette butts.

"This, Tim," I explained, "is Elena. We just got married. And she's really cool and started the whole Riot Grrrl thing up here in New York!"

Tim started laughing so hard he coughed up a lung cookie or two. Fucking cancer.

"You, with a Riot Grrrl!" he exclaimed. "I never thought I'd live long enough to see the day".

"Ahem," I said.

"Okay, be around you long enough," said Tim, a bit more subdued.

"You know Tim," I said, climbing on my high horse, "if you hadn't smoked so much, and also, you shouldn't throw dirty cigarette butts on the ground. Dogs can..."

"Nobody can see me except you and Elena," explained Tim. "Oh, besides Jett and Rocket, and my old pal Scooter, whom I play Risk and poker with every week."

"You play games with my best friend who passed away? Scooter?" I asked him.

"I thought I was your best friend," said Tim, "I guess it's true about what they say about those four-legged cheating beasts."

"Huh," I said to him, my mind still reeling from the fact that he hangs out with Scooter.

"He cheats. Or at least I think he does. There is no way that dog can get so many full houses and straights in one night!" exclaimed Tim.

"My dog doesn't cheat," I told Tim, "And for you to even imply…"

"Oh, and he doesn't like that you call him 'my dog'. He's his own person. Actually Punk Rock! You didn't tell me he wrote most of the Furious George material…"

"Well, I was going to, but..." I started to explain.

"Whatever," laughed Tim, now back in full laugh mode. "Anyway, you are probably wondering why I am here as The Ghost of Christmas Past…"

"Actually," I said to my old friend, "It didn't even cross my mind. The whole coming back from the dead and *still smoking* is what has really got me…"

"Can we not talk about that? I mean, the smoking part," asked Tim.

I nodded my head okay, as Jett and Rocket collected every tennis ball in the dog run they could find and dropped them at Tim's Doc Marten-booted feet.

"So I'm here," said Tim, "because I've come to warn you that this Christmas Day…"

"He really is as funny and cute as you described" said Elena, finally shaken from her state of shock of meeting a dead person. It happens all the time with me, so I guess I should have remembered how it affects others. Actually, maybe it's just eating bad Chinese food before bed.

"He is, isn't he?" I asked her. "Tim has been my friend since I basically started Roach Motel," I explained. "He gave us our first review of our first demo on TDK Records!"

"Okay," said Elena.

"TDK was a brand of cassette tape," I explained to her. "Get it, TDK Records? TDK Recording Artists, as it read on our press releases…"

"So?" said Elena, again with a straight face.

"Nevermind," I uttered.

"Good," yelled Tim, "Now can I please get back to what I was saying that is *very* important?

"Hey Tim," I said, "Why did the Crip and the Blood dress up for their sperm tests?"

"Is this really necessary?" asked Tim.

I nodded.

"Okay," said Tim, trying not to laugh, "Why did the Crip and the Blood dress up for their sperm tests?"

"Because," I explained, "If you gonna be impotent, you guts to look impotent!"

Tim laughed, and then vanished.

"Where'd you go?" I yelled.

"Fuck it," said Tim, "I'll let the next ghost, The Ghost of Christmas Present, explain it to you!"

"As in Christmas present or Christmas present?" I yelled.

"Ha," I heard Tim say as he faded away and the silence of the snow falling returned.

"Well," I said to Elena and the furfaces, "That was weird."

"I don't think it was half as weird as that guy standing behind you," said Elena, a bit shaken-up, and actually showing fear in her eyes.

Before I spun around, I smelled it. Shit. Poop. And urine. Also Jim Beam, beer, bad weed, and a hint of some "Jovan Musk For Men" I had given him quite a while ago, actually.

"GG" I said, as I turned around to see my old pal in his trademark "Eat Me" jock strap, as well as a soiled doctor's lab coat, and a cowboy hat. He's got huge stitches that make the shape of a "Y" on his chest, and some stitches around the back of his neck as well.

"Tabby, Baby," said my old smelly pal.

"You're still using some of that Jovan I gave you," I said.

"Naw," said Frankenweenie. "Just haven't bathed in decades."

I looked toward Elena who looked really pale, then fainted into a pile of snow.

"Still haven't lost my touch," grinned GG.

"No," I said, "No, you haven't!"

"George," he said, suddenly seriously. "I am The Ghost of Christmas Present and…."

To Be Continued…

Take My Life, Please!

ENDNOTES:

1) The new Call of Duty has Jet Packs and is really fast, so it's the best one yet! Destiny is also another really cool game. The Dwarves new album is rad, as is the World Inferno Friendship Society one. Ask for all of this from Santa…

I woke up in Montreal at the start of November. It was 6 pm and I'd slept the cold autumn day away. A naïve combination of too much cheap coffee and jetlag had gotten this trip away from Melbourne off to a rocky start. Today is the third and last day of A Varning. A week before this I was in Melbourne finishing the latest issue of my fanzine before I left for that city's premier rock'n'roll scum venue, the Tote, where the biggest night of Maggot Fest was about to take place.

Maggot Fest. Affectionately named so, as it seemed to be a weekend of exception where local underground music recluses venture out, the straight-laced party hard and the party animals somehow party harder. Different scenes and different fans merging on these nights for mostly local and other interstate acts brought together to create a crowded and lively weekend. Thrash metal punks SEWERCIDE pulled out on the first night of Thursday. October 30, at the Bendigo Hotel, leaving it to a night of INTERNAL ROT, BLACK DEITY (QLD), HEADLESS DEATH, POWER, and HOBOMAGIC (QLD). LAST CHAOS (QLD) headlined Halloween, Friday the 31st at the Tote, supported by PRAG (WA), SICK PEOPLE (QLD), RIPPED OFF

(QLD), KRÖMOSOM, RORT, LEATHER LICKERS, SPLIT TEETH, BLACK DEITY (QLD), METER MEN, R.I.P FUCKER, BLOODRULE and GENE HALL.

ROYAL HEADACHE's first show in eighteen months meant a sold-out show on Saturday the 1st of November. Them and LOW LIFE, also from Sydney, were the two most anticipated bands of the night and neither let the crowd. LOW LIFE was dreary and down in the dirt, but there was a feeling of excitement to be playing to a crowd so eager to see them after their recent LP release. ROYAL HEADACHE wass happy and upbeat with some melancholy but Shogun's persona on stage just made it seem like he hated being there and hated everyone enjoying his band. Recently returned from a successful US tour, AUSMUTEANTS headlined with jangly but thrashy keyboard tunes. RUINED FORTUNE (NSW), LAKES, WHITE WALLS, CONSTANT MONGREL, ORION (NSW), BOTOX (SA), TYRANNAMEN, DRIBBLE, MASSES, POWER, ZODIAC (QLD), DRUG SWEAT, MISS DESTINY, BAD FAMILY and UNPEOPLE (QLD) also were on this third and most anticipated big night. I fell into the "straight-laced partying hard" category that weekend and so missed around 70% of the bands. I couldn't keep up with all the stages so just dropped out completely, spending my time snorting speed in the toilets, chain smoking in the courtyard, and chatting my face off about who-knows-what. The bands from Melbourne I could see any other weekend—I made sure to catch the interstaters but flaked on the locals.

A few small shows were organized on the side. On Sunday at the long defunct Catfood Press venue was an Australia-wide line up, with GENTLEMEN from Melbourne and repeat gig offenders PRAG (WA), UNPEOPLE (QLD), and BOTOX (SA). The tiny room packed out and Botox were given a chance to redeem themselves to the Melbourne crowd after technical problems the night before completely shut down their set. All the bands put out some killer sounds, and it's the only show I actually saw all of the bands because I'd partied myself out over the previous few nights so went in to this one and stayed sober. That Sunday night was the last night of Maggot Fest but instead of attending that show of MOB (NSW), TOL, ORION (NSW), DESTINY 3000 (NSW), 2200 and the MISHAPS, I travelled to the other side of town to see Australian punk pioneers, RADIO BIRDMAN. I don't have much to say about the show except that they blew my expectations out of the water and put on a great performance. I skipped the supports, honestly not even giving a chance to these bands I knew I couldn't give a fuck about. The crowd was full of old dudes who probably saw them back in the day but haven't been to a show of recent local bands in like 30 years, and younger guys that maybe listen to some old Australian rock on CD but don't go and see bands live often, so their social interactions and sense of humor is fairly juvenile and cringe-worthy. At one point RADIO BIRDMAN finished a song and one person starts yelling stuff out, including "Go back to your country!" then turning to his mate chuckling, "I just had to say it, haw haw." No, you didn't, it doesn't make any sense in context and if it did you'd still be an ignorant racist jerk. Aside from a boring crowd with a weak and amateur mosh, RADIO BIRDMAN were really tight, their musicianship professional. They pumped out the classics, including "Anglo-Girl Desire," "Do the Pop" and "Non-stop Girls". They also covered the 13th FLOOR ELEVATORS "You're Going To Miss Me". The next day, after a weekend of cream-of-the-crop live punk music and partying hard, I got on a flight out of Melbourne. It was the start of 50 hours in transit that would land me in Canada in time for A Varning In Montreal 2014 the following weekend.

This was my first Varning and my first time in Montreal. Earlier this year, I had driven THEE NODES around Australia when they joined forces with Lewis from No Patience Records, who brought them Down Under to tour. They were the only people I knew in this city and Matt (representative of Mr. Node) was kind enough to offer me a place to stay while in their hometown. Maggot Fest, ended their series of shows with a synth punk night, and Varning had a similar styled niche night of dark punk and death rock to kick it all off. I went into this fest only knowing a few bands on the bill but keen to see all. It was a total plus that it was at one venue with one stage all the way through (except for the Saturday night after-show). There was a huge distro set up all three days, with lots of merch to browse and blow all my cash on, as well as vegan food available upstairs for the hungry punx.

I walked into Katacombes on Thursday to see one-man Philly band the HOLIDAYS finish his set by abruptly stopping, picking up his pedal and slamming it into the ground. On second was Montreal's PERVERTED JUSTICE. Dark wave SCREAMERS kind of punk, their GG Allin cover was weird in a good way, done in their own style and not actually trying to cover the song to every detail. I was skeptical of them at the start but really got into it by the end. EFFET WERTHER were one of the few bands I didn't like that weekend. I found them simple (or minimal if you want to put a positive spin on it), posey, and boring. Kind of JOY DIVISION sounding with all the live flares overdone. Wasn't keen on the electronic drum track they had going instead of an actual drummer. Ontario's AUBE and BALC BARON followed. I'd heard LOST TRIBE before and was keen to see their live set. They seemed to be an influential band in Australian contemporary dark wave punk that has swept through our scene the last few years, recently quieting back down. Thought it was pretty cool, even with the suffocating amounts of fog from the smoke machine. HORROR VACUI matched Lost Tribe's vibe with interesting death rock from Italy, but by that point I was ready to call it a night and didn't pay them much attention. I'd hardly slept the last few days of transit so stood outside smoking until I could get a lift back.

I got to the show on Friday and felt absolutely horrible. There were a few people from the US floating around that I knew but instead of taking advantage of this rare time together, I grabbed a cider and made a bee-line to a seat on the upstairs level to hide out and watch the bands alone. I had hardly slept in five days now and it was driving me around the bend. Local Montreal band DEAD FUTURE were on first. Sounded like a charged snotty '77 punk three piece, hiding behind masks and war paint, and looking a bit daggy in doing so. I recognized Sam drumming, who also drums for THEE NODES. This December they'll play their last show in Montreal. CREEPING DOSE had a flesh light mic, going along the lines of UK82 hardcore punk. BORN WRONG followed, then PMMA who sounded like goth UK space punk rock. Intrigued by and dug their weird style. ASILE, NAPALM RAID, and DISHONOURABLE DISCHARGE kept the show upbeat and interesting with decent music. I bumped into an old friend from Australia who lived in the laundry of my first share house and I'd seen once every one or two years since. He'd being living in Montreal the last few months and after a chat handed over a little baggie of coke. It was my toilet escape when I got sick of walking around by myself because I wasn't fucked up enough to shoot shit with people. I was really impressed by SEX DWARF, rating this Swedish noise punk band my favourite of the night, blown away by their tunes and live performance. LIFE headlined. They were drunk and sloppy but noisy and entertaining. The bassist kept swinging his bass around his head and was really loose, but again it was the end of the night and I couldn't watch the whole set. I went to a party afterward and sat alone for the most part, until Matt and I walked and grabbed some greasy grub before calling it a night.

Saturday night opened with ERA LIBRE. I wasn't really digging this Spanish punk

with weird breakdowns, it was simple and not captivating. Krystyna from Pittsburgh had been DJing the last few nights so I'd say hi to her every now and then, browse the merch, catch up with some other people and kind of repeat the process while keeping to myself, mostly just enjoying being in a different place and seeing a bunch of new bands. CHLOROFORM and MALOKIO I enjoyed, SEXFACE sounded like average UK82, SKULL 'N' BONE were worthy of note, a band I'd listen to on record but seemed a bit out of place in between all the raw punk and noise at this show. THE STASI killed it and were my favourite band this night. SAVAGEHEADS from Boston cancelled and were replaced by…fuck, I don't remember. LOS MONJO were a lot of fun, RAMONES meets the SECRET PROSTITUTES kinda punk.

LOS MONJOS finished an unbelievably long set, and everyone poured out of the venue to regroup and get to the after-show. After finally leaving Katacombes, getting lost and stopping to get food, we made it to Loud House. By the time we got there PARASYTES had already played and EEL were just about to begin. I was stoked to see them again, the last time being my trip to the States in 2013, supporting KRÖMOSOM in Cleveland a year-and-a-half ago. Earlier in the day, Matt had taken me to experience the wonders of the Dollarama store. While there, he spotted cans of silly string. Carrying them around in my bag all night was worth it for this set, and I went about covering the roof and band with this plastic obnoxiousness while Matt crowd-surfed to these noisy pogo party punx. I was completely fucked by the end of their set and sat outside for LIFE (who I heard also did a killer set). We left for the subway as the sun was rising, getting back to Matt's house with enough time to squeeze in an hour's nap. It was another night of little sleep and my eyes were burning as I set off to get the bus to the airport, no stops to Cleveland, OH.

Personal punk report for this month. Things are alright. I'm still a punk because punk is still something really close to what I am. For more details, continue reading.

It is fun to launch my mind on a late afternoon cruise among punk sounds, ideas and the result of how some ideas sound. Rakta played a transcendental set here, flavored with burning out smoke sticks and lots of reverb. Their sound was more of an idea than a recipe for manufacturing music. I really don't like and neither believe when bands pretended that the music they make is totally coincidental. If you like music you can and should know how your band sounds—at least you should be able to say how you wanted it to sound. It doesn't mean that your music is not visceral. Preplanning doesn't always end up in being pretentious. I say this but Rakta makes music in a unique and dreamish way that is more than an idea that could be scripted so easily. Their set was great and the whole event was filled with good vibes. Except for assholes who wanted to or successfully did sneak in at the door. Way to make a scene stop running, fucking poseurs.

This month the rambling continues because I realized that this is a punk fanzine in which my task is to write about the punk I experience and probably (hopefully) this is what people are expecting from me to do. I started getting hooked on a Hungarian writer who says great things are more than what was put into them. Meaning, a sentence is more than just an order of letters and a story is more than a structure of sentences. Just like punk music is so much more than amateurishly executed songs from frustrated kids to frustrated kids. It's us and the ways we cope with reality.

It's December and that really embarrassing period of the year starts again when I have to go through the whole year's releases, searching for and more focused on non-American/Japanese/Spanish/Scandinavian bands. Why? Because I believe that every year, the whole year, amazing punk is happening and I wanna hear it, I don't wanna lock myself out of it even if I had tons of fun this year with spending endless hours listening to Yugoslavian hardcore, Italian raging filth punx and French ultra violent amphetamine-core. It's still true that those bands are slightly better because they did not give a damn about making it, about being included in anyone's YETT in *MRR* or being put on any blogs that are the channel of hype in the basement world. They were free, being cut loose—this is what I miss from most of the bands today. Contemporary punk is good, great, giving me what I want, but today most of my browsing was spent staring at pictures of skinheads posing on the front covers of hardcore records. I remember I said Oi! is great and stomping is fun but this is the end of the year when I have to focus on what was the best and greatest thing this year. Hardcore is more than music, it is communication; even if it's dumb as fuck it has to say something unique, individual and interesting to me. Even in the most aggressive, catatonic noise there should be a levitating power that makes me feel great, as if I were encountering something utterly beautiful. But there is nothing in perfectly reproducing a recipe. In perfection there is no humanity, only mistakes are personal and punk is really personal because it's based on glorifying mistakes. I want to hear the best mistakes because fuck you, punk is fucking sick and it's the best entertainment.

People around me say I make too much noise. My ex-roommate usually laughed at me while I was playing a record, listening to something on my laptop, watching a YouTube video, and playing on my guitar all at the same time. More than anything this is an experiment. It's being stoned on a weekday night, laying alone in my bed and getting hooked again on hardcore. Starting from Underdog and ending up at Skullflower, watching countries, eras, sounds blend together, missing something all the time, always wanting more. I want everything from 2014.

One long sentence: Probably one of the best records this year is White Wards' *Cigarette Burns*; the name of the LP, the art, the sounds, all those little pieces coming together gently, to make something aggressively disgusting, a powerhouse of universal noise, noise that is from everywhere and, while it is not the deconstruction of sounds that are reconstructed by one band but all those feelings that triggered great scenes, these sounds are present here as well. There are joints within Die Kreuzen and Mars and through these a hungry mind could travel really far. So good how here evidential parts are beyond the music and only the possibility exists because White Wards always use some other ways to maintain this confusion. What made bands like Cold Sweat brilliant lives on in White Wards—it's the combination of confident, maniac pace that wildly flows into familiar disturbance, letting it be anything that is a ragtag company of deviated sounds. It's total hardcore.

Another band that is total, meaning they pick their sounds from the full spectrum of music, is Total Control. The more I listen to their second LP the deeper I'm sinking among the many layers of their music, and sometimes I start to wonder why it is called punk music, while there is no other definition that could fit their music better. It's everything, it's so full of ideas while the songs have a sort of simple form, but they sound as if the band listened to everything and from that experience they have created this. This peaks out from music while music backs it up, lifts it up to rise and shine. They merge feelings, they can do whatever they want, it's just perfect. They are silent about many things, this is why this record carries a literature component as well, because to

write a novel is to be silent about many things, and while Total Control could be anything, they have chosen to be just a perfect form, which is detailed, thought out and sort of controlled but within this overlooked platform they seem to have enough freedom from bright creativity.

There was Ivy, there was Good Throb, guitar sounds that were flinging around in my brain all year merging cool filth from all over the basement universe, demonstrating the wonders of using that punk kick when both bands' music is coming from a fragile nest and from this they build up a brave, reckless, cynical structure of notes. The careless execution of perfect punk is so vivid and unstoppable on these records that it makes me want to roll around in filth. I loved the confident, solid strength in Good Throb's music, that thought of how they are so sure about their voice, which divides into the gut-punching angst that is gathered up in a form of pure bile thanks to the nauseating side effects of living in today's society, and how the music is magically falling apart everywhere all the time. This state of tearing apart the noise allows their music to fit any state of mind, time of day, or taste. It's hardcore, sure, but then there is the elevating chorus of "Psycho Disco" that is some end-state of guitar playing perfection for a punk, for broken ears and exhausted minds. It's brilliant and fun, fun, fun. Just like Ivy, gathering together many bright minds to create this cultish band—no V is replacing any U, by cult I mean as a reflection of America's craziness that was once perfectly captured by Saccharine Trust. They too sound like a sewer gang got together to paint a sonic portrait of everything, be it everyday impotency or lurking around psychopaths, lurching serial killers, their operation is like scripting an underground pamphlet read by everyone since it reports the malformed reality. Their guitars are like a guitar robe which is slinging on the body priest on psychedelic drugs performing a black celebration. Helicopters above our heads, bugs in our phones, Ivy is living, it's forming, it bursts out. They bring back the real filth of New York when hardcore was dangerous, even when it was played by slim nerds.

The sad thing is you have all known this already. There've got to be bands all around the world just as good as the ones above. Not better, more real or anything, but just as good.

For example, local Hungarian high school kids choose to spend a fraction of their free time in rehearsal rooms rather than just hang out. They have recorded and put out a kickass demo. They are called Youth Sucks and they rip. If Hungarian kids are capable of creating raging, fractured, loud, distorted music, everyone else can. It isn't banned in all countries to learn some notes on guitar, listen to music through the internet or anything, but I guess most of *MRR* readers are in a luckier position. Yes, the infrastructure is not always accessible but "Nervous Breakdown" was recorded through an amp that did not need distortion because it was already there. And since there is no excuse for bands not to be good, there shouldn't be an excuse for those who write history to cover the stories of every band everywhere. There is no scientific reason why some countries are better at producing music than others, it's just those scenes get the coverage. This makes other countries want the coverage for themselves so badly they start to reproduce the hyped sounds. This leads into some terrible shit if you are not from Japan. Then it will be the best, next level, another universe mutant sound, but Japan is just a little island so far away from almost anything. Still they were able to gain fame. We know everything that is written by someone else, we use channels, scientists, reports. *MRR* is one of them and the bizarre thing is that even I know less about the whole punk universe than anyone who lives in SF and could hang out at the compound, and browse through the archive anytime they wanted to. Thus the responsibility is on all of us who have this platform and this is why I'm having half-fun, half-work going through this year's punk.

While doing that, I should say that I got two killer released in Berlin from this really nice guy called Asaf. One is his release called VVhile from either/or/both Serbia/ Macedonia. They mix together shoegaze dreaminess with late-era Dischord post-everything. If I remember right, they have some kind of connection to Bernay's Propaganda, whom I saw last year and who played an amazing set of mutant disco punk. It's not just quality music but the cover art is sick too. A bit too tidy for my filth-loving ear but it's original and fun.

The other material I got is his band called Shifka Chiefs, hailing from Israel. It's knife sharp guitars mixed together with intentional dumbness and lots of pure energy. It's nerdy garage music focused more on being creative in playing the guitar than in mixing drugs and booze in yourself. Again, I'm with the falling apart sounds so if everybody says you should tune your guitar, please record your set and send it to me one way or another. As it happened today, when a band called American Hate messaged me because they want to play here. They are from Oklahoma and play the classic total craziness of the Midwest, locked in acid drinking bad vision fest. Guitars are going off crazy, drums are unstoppable, the singer chants like a fucking maniac, they cover a Devo song, there is feedback, this could fit into a genre but would stand out from it, because there is something else to their sound—maybe it's a calm state to know they won't be recognized thus they could blow out their sound anyway they want it. It feels like sweating for nothing, going to sleep while hungry or wanting to barf after overeating yourself. It's too less and too much, and I have never, ever heard of this fucking band. Now use your fucking fingers and write me about the best nightmare guitar pop bands from Italy, about total hardcore attack from Latvia, about anything from anywhere.

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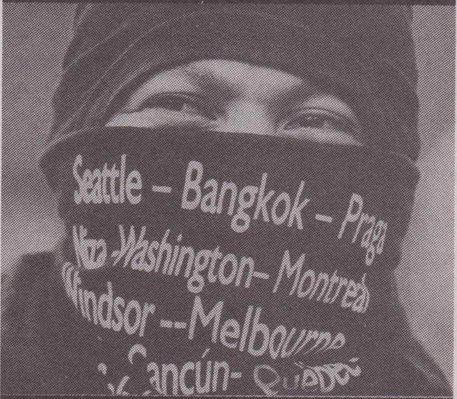
Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan - What's Left?

I'm sick of the blood and I'm sick of the bleeding, the effort it takes just to keep on dreaming of better days, and better ways of living.
—Michael Timmins, *Cowboy Junkies* "Fairytale," *The Wilderness: The Nomad Series*

"A new world is possible" was the slogan that emerged from the era of anti-globalization protests, which in turn evolved into an endless series of social forums that continue to this day. Airy and tentative compared to the insurrectionist communizing nihilism that followed, this sentiment is the lite version of a prefiguring politics that goes back at least as far as the 1905 Industrial Workers of the World constitution which called for "building a new world in the shell of the old." Indeed, it can be argued that "[s] ocial revolutions are a compromise between utopia and historical reality. The tool of the revolution is utopia, and the material is the social reality on which one wants to impose a new form. And the tool must to some degree fit the substance if the results are not to become ludicrous." So wrote the young, still Marxist Leszek Kolakowski in his essay "The Concept of the Left." Thus, I intend to define who and what is trying to make a new world possible, and how successful such efforts have been to date.

I've always considered myself on the side of those who would create a new and better world. And I have more than a passing interest in the claimed existence of The Historical Agent (THA—also called the revolutionary agent/subject, or the social agent/subject), the radical social grouping with the human agency to affect revolutionary social change not just in the past but in our lifetime. Walter Benjamin proposed a similar messianic understanding of history, a sense of messianic time or a weak messianic power he associated with Marxist historical materialism and couched in cryptic, poetic terms in "The Concept of History" which ends with the statement that "[f]or every second of time was the strait gate through which Messiah might enter." Unfortunately the four broad terms usually synonymous or often conflated with THA—The Workers Movement, Socialism, The Left, and The Movement—each tries yet fails to be sufficiently all inclusive.*

The modern workers movement which congealed out of Medieval artisan and peasant strata can be said to have its origins in the practice of English Chartism at the beginning of the 19th century, and in Marx's theoretical efforts to define such workers as a social class based on their relationship to the means of production. The economic labor unions and political workers parties of this emerging working class, not to mention the labor syndicates and workers councils that combined economic and political power, spread widely well into the 20th century, extending working class culture and consciousness internationally. Efforts to make The Workers Movement either less Marxist (by describing workers as simply "everyone who works for a living") or more Marxist (through Leninist notions of the "industrial proletariat" or Maoist concepts of "proletarian consciousness") must now give way to discussions of post industrial workers, marginal or precarious workers, or the abolition of the working class altogether.

Socialism refers to political theory and practice, as well as organizations, movements and regimes based upon social ownership of the means of production and cooperative management of economy and society. Socialism as such goes back to the 18th, if not the 17th centuries, centered primarily in Europe. With roots in millenarian and utopian traditions, socialism diversified through the 19th and 20th centuries, though it can be generally categorized as either working class or non-working class based. In a 21st century rife with capitalist triumphalism, socialism has become a curse.

Born from an accident of seating arrangements in the National Constituent Assembly after the 1789 French Revolution, The Left means the politics and activity that arose from 1848 onward. Centered in Europe, it comprised Marxism (and eventually Leninism), anarchism, syndicalism, unaffiliated socialisms, even types of political democracy and liberalism. The Left's configuration dramatically changed after 1945. First, there was massive proliferation as Leninism of Stalinism, Maoism and Third Worldism. Second, there was the consolidation and attenuation of Marxist social democracy. Third, there was the virtual extinction of anarchism/ultraleftism before its youthful resurgence. Fourth, there was the purposeful non-alignment of other forms of socialism. And fifth, there was the rise and fall of democratic liberalism. With the exception of anarchism/ultraleftism, these political forms experienced a contraction and retrenchment on or before the 1989-91 collapse of the Soviet bloc.

Finally, The Movement covers Leftist politics and practice, as well as organizations and movements within the United States from the mid-1960s on. This was when the Marxist-Leninist old Left was superseded by a New Left rapidly differentiating into New Communist Movement and other kinds of Third World politics, an evanescent anarchism/ultraleftism also quickly diversifying, proliferating forms of non-affiliated socialism and liberalism, and a plethora of social movements such as Women's Liberation, Gay Liberation, Black (brown/red/yellow) Liberation, etc. In turn, the "crisis of socialism" that has riven The Movement since 1991 has produced a near universal turn toward identity politics and postmodern Leftism.

It's not enough to consider whether THA is an adequate analytical category, a viable classification comprised of the intersection between The Workers Movement, Socialism, The Left, and The Movement. "The Messiah comes not only as the redeemer," Walter Benjamin said, "he comes as the subduer of Antichrist." Four overlapping Venn Diagram shapes cannot magically yield a clearly defined collective human entity with historical agency within the convergence of these four nebulous social movements. There is still no precise historical delineation of who or what is responsible for the meager successes and overwhelming failures that I identify with as a socialist, a Leftist, a member of the working class, or a part of The Movement.

Until the 1917 Russian Revolution, history was one of three painful steps forward and two excruciating steps back. The period of world wide social upheaval bracketed by the first and second World Wars produced a sudden revolutionary surge from 1945 through 1985. "Real existing Socialism" (Soviet and Chinese style Communism, the so-called Second World) dominated a fifth of the earth's land surface and a third of the world's human population. Social democracy and social movements contested ground in the First World. And socialist struggles for national liberation and socialist national non-alignment proliferated in the Third World.

There were indications that all was not well however, especially in the West. I have argued for Geoffrey Wheatcroft's somewhat pessimistic evaluation of the 1968 Generation's impact ("It was fun, but 1968's legacy was mixed," *Guardian Weekly*, 9/5/08) in a previous column. In covering much the same ground ("Egalité! Liberté! Sexualité!: Paris, May 1968," *The Independent*, 9/23/08), John Lichfield reposted the overly simplistic formulation that 1968's rebellious youth "had lost politically but they had won culturally and maybe even spiritually." Timothy Brennan spends many an essay in his book *Wars of Position* contending that the poststructural, postmodern Left, especially in Western universities, had embarked by 1975 on a "war against left Hegelian thought" that successfully buried Marxism, its "dialectical thinking and the political energies—including the anti-colonial energies—that grew out of it" by the mid '80s.

These setbacks were minor however compared to the watershed collapse of "real existing Socialism" between 1989 and 1991. Kenan Malik summarized the consequences that followed this turning point in his 1998 essay "Race, Pluralism and the Meaning of Difference":

The social changes that have swept the world over the past decade have intensified this sense of pessimism. The end of the Cold War, the collapse of the left, the fragmentation of the postwar order, the defeat of most liberation movements in the third world and the demise of social movements in the West, have all transformed political consciousness. In particular, they have thrown into question the possibility of social transformation.

The Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union disintegrated, the power of the organized working class dramatically declined, all fronts from anti-colonial to social justice struggles experienced profound retreat, labor and social democratic parties and regimes were neoliberalized. Any one of these historical events is immensely complicated and deserving of deep historical analysis. Yet, collectively, they have been naively hailed by Establishment pundits as the results of the world wide triumph of capitalism, an end to the bipolar world order under neoliberalism's Pax Americana, even "the end of history."

I don't have the space to disabuse my readers of this jejune myth of capitalism's unequivocal victory and socialism's

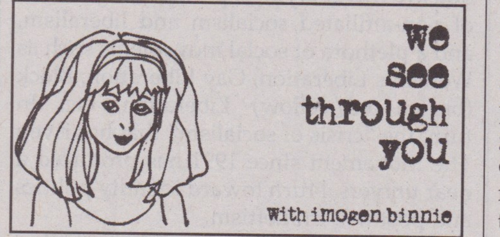
undeniable defeat. But I do have the time to shatter the delusion, promulgated principally by anarchists, that with the near universal decline and defeat of the "authoritarian Left" their time has come, and that the future is anti-authoritarian. Clearly, forms of anarchism, neo-anarchism, libertarian Marxism and even leaderless Leninism are some of the fastest growing political tendencies on the Left over the last two or so decades. Yet those who wish to understand how things change, historically and socially, need to heed the conclusions arrived at by Max Boot in his comprehensive historical overview of guerrilla warfare entitled *Invisible Armies*:

Anarchists did not defeat anyone. By the late 1930s their movements had been all but extinguished. In the more democratic states, better policing allowed terrorists to be arrested while more liberal labor laws made it possible for workers to peacefully redress their grievances through unions. In the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany, anarchists were repressed with brute force. The biggest challenge was posed by Nestor Makhno's fifteen thousand anarchist guerrillas in Ukraine during the Russian Civil War, but they were finally "liquidated" by the Red Army in 1921. In Spain anarchists were targeted both by Franco's Fascists and by their Marxists "comrades" during the 1936-39 civil war—as brilliantly and bitterly recounted by George Orwell in Homage to Catalonia. *Everywhere anarchists were pushed into irrelevance by Moscow's successful drive to establish communism as the dominant doctrine of the left.* […] *Based on their record as of 2012, Islamist groups were considerably more successful in seizing power than the anarchists but considerably less successful than the liberal nationalists of the nineteenth century or the communists of the twentieth century.* ("Bomb Throwers: Propaganda by the Deed" and "God's Killers: Down and Out?")

It should be obvious with the end of the Cold War that matters are far more complicated than a superficial battle between, and facile triumph of, good over evil. Equally obvious is that the concept of THA remains a slippery one, resonant with messianic intent, and hence one not easily pinned down by its successes or failures. Finally, I hope I've made it obvious that anarchism's history is one of unmitigated defeat, and that anarchism by itself lacks the historical agency to do jack shit.

*[A discussion of agency is a consideration of human subjectivity. In contrast, emphasizing the objective to the point of denying the subject has a long tradition in Marxism, beginning with vulgar Marxism which contended that inevitable economic crises caused by predetermined historical circumstances would bring about the certain downfall of capitalism, whether or not humans had anything to do with it. Louis Althusser formulated a Marxist Structuralism in which ideological and material structures define the human subject out of existence. Thus, history becomes "a process without a subject" according to Althusser. Finally, the current Marxist school broadly subsumed under the rubric Krisis, or the Critique of Value, argues that capitalism is a single interconnected system of capital and labor components bound together by the valorization of capital, which transforms into the valorization of value and which will inevitably collapse due to crisis. Labor has no historical agency, but is merely an abstract historical category. History might harbor many revolutionary subjects, but the working class as a class cannot be one. Workers cannot constitute a revolutionary social class.]

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, End Time, *from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called* Fim *in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones a month delayed on my blog, leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@me.com.*



Do you know this band Bleed the Pigs? They rule, they do like a sludge/grind thing that drops into a second gear Converge trudge sometimes—and I mean, I can't really think of a higher compliment than comparing a band to Converge. You know? Converge rules. The biggest tattoo I have by a factor of like eight is a Converge tattoo. Anyway Bleed the Pigs rules and they've been playing shows with like Cloud Rat, who also rule, in towns far away from me, which sucks. The Bleed The Pigs song "Should" has been my go-to mix tape closer for like three months.

Hold that thought.

While I'm writing this a grand jury just decided not to indict a white cop named Darren Wilson for killing an unarmed black teenager named Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. The guy in charge of explaining why Darren Wilson was not indicted gave this like twenty-minute-long speech on TV about all the reasons that the situation was complicated—which is supposed to be the whole point of having a trial, right? To determine what happened, who was at fault, cross-examine lying police and police apologists, and stuff like that. Like all the reasons this prosecutor guy or whatever was giving for not indicting this cop were actually reasons that there should have been an indictment. It's pretty fucking straightforward.

This is what America does: it lets cops kill black men with impunity.

A couple days after the non-indictment of Darren Wilson was announced, a grand jury decided that it would not indict a police officer named Daniel Pantaleo for choking a black man named Eric Garner to death, apparently because Pantaleo thought Garner was selling loosies. Garner was black and asthmatic, on top of other health stuff; his last words were "I can't breathe," repeated eleven times.

We've been talking about this a lot. Hopefully by the time this column goes to press, we'll still be talking about it. Because here's the thing: this might be news right now, but it isn't new. This is just what happens in America. Cops kill black people and get away with it.

You're a punker, right? You hate cops. We all hate cops. But if you're white? That +HIRS+ NO GODS NO COPS sticker—I won't lie to you, dude, the same one that's on the back of the computer I'm typing this on—is basically a badge of privilege. What's a cop going to do to me for having an anti-cop sticker on my computer or a patch on my vest or whatever? They're gonna read me as a white lady, or maybe on a bad day as some kind of queer white man in a dress or something. Either way, these images, these cultural tropes that are supposed to be about me, even as a white person who's marginalized for being queer and/or trans, are very different from the cultural tropes that get thrown in all our faces, every day, about black people. About black men, definitely, but also about black women—including black trans women. (What images come into your head when you think the words "black trans woman" or "black transsexual"? What images do you think come into a cop's head when he thinks those words? Do you think those images are based on firsthand experience, or on made-up bullshit from a racist media?) Even black children: a twelve-year-old boy named Tamir Rice was shot by a white cop named Timothy Loehmann in Cleveland recently, too, apparently because he had a toy gun, although the security video shows that Loehmann rolled up and shot the child within two seconds of getting out of the police car.

Two seconds.

Loehmann then told dispatch that he thought the twelve-year-old boy he'd just shot was a "black male, maybe twenty."

He thought a twelve-year-old was a twenty-year-old.

Imagine a white person mistaking a twelve-year-old white boy for a twenty-year-old white man.

Look. Personally? I'm a white person. What the fuck do I know? Anything I could tell you about anti-black racism in America would just be a watered-down version of things I've heard black people say, or that I've read in black people's writing, mixed with my own ignorance and lack of firsthand experience of being on the receiving end of anti-black racism. I'm not here to tell anybody what to do or anything, but I do want to say that this is a thing that white people need to be talking about, and need to be confronting, because not confronting it or talking about it is straight-up complicity with it. I know you hate cops. But if you're white and you hate cops, what are you doing with that hate? Like, can you copwatch in your town? It sucks to interact with police, especially if you are weirdo looking at all, but also...I mean, cops are less likely to kill an unarmed asthmatic black man if there's a white person watching them. That is a pretty serious thing. Or: are you calling people on saying racist shit? Are you perpetuating racist shit yourself without really thinking about it? (Hint: probably. To some extent, we all are. We live in a culture that rewards that behavior and being defensive about it is kinda counterproductive.) I mean, you know that thing (I don't know who to attribute it to, although it gets associated with Howard Zinn a lot) about how you can't be neutral on a moving train? Well that train is fucking moving.

You use the internet, right? Even if it's at the library or on an old phone with a cracked screen somebody gave you, free McDonalds wifi sprawled out in the parking lot to hack the fucking Gibson. I'm gonna put some links to smart things that black friends and people I admire have written on my website at keepyourbridgesburning.com/fuckdarrenwilson, if you want to read them next time you're online.

Like, I'll definitely include a link to "What Do Hardcore, Ferguson, and the 'Angry Black Woman' trope All Have In Common?", one of the best things I've read in a really long time. I kinda want to just quote the whole thing here, but I don't think I get to. You should read it. Kayla Phillips, who sings in Bleed the Pigs, wrote it. The whole essay is fucking brilliant and I asked her if it was okay to quote this part from it and she said yes, so I'm going to back off and close this column with her words. (Thanks Kayla!)

Solidarity isn't white guilt and apologies for being white. No one is asking for that. Solidarity is awareness, and the ability to listen if you say you're going to. It's standing beside me or behind me, not in front of me. It's the ability to look at oneself and break down internalized issues, instead of tokenizing someone. It's realizing that not all spaces and conversations are about you personally. It's not shocking that my place in the scene is being used by people that haven't even listened to our music, but who just eat up the idea of how inclusive it looks to have a photoset of a black girl screaming into the mic on their blogs. In the same way Frida Kahlo's face is appropriated by white feminism while her words are not, this not-so-new wave of people are latching onto our identities and experiences and whitewashing every word for easy swallowing. We're used and ignored in the same breath. You want me to be here, but not too much. If I speak up and it's too real, I need to give you a lollipop afterwards, or you'll never learn, and you'll be too scared to talk to me again. These are ways of covering up our mouths with attempts to stifle and contain our liberation. In this subculture, that goes against what we're here for. Our voices and existence shouldn't be tolerated in your scene, they should be accepted. I shouldn't have to silence myself in order to have a place here. I shouldn't have to pretend that there are no issues.

My friends, it is the end of an era. You don't know what you've got until it's gone, etcetera etcetera. Of course I'm talking about TOM AND BOOT BOYS, coming to an end after twenty-plus glorious years of fucking up, passing out and making some of the purest pogo punk ever committed to tape. Thankfully, they went out with a bang (quite a literal one in New York, where some ignorant fucker's giant firework detonation almost caused the cancellation of the show!). A three-day mega fest in Japan, two packed-out US gigs and a slew of final releases helped ease the band into the great beyond, and we're all better off for it.

I'll cop to not being able to catch a copy of the gig-only one-sided *Suck My Fuckin' Dick Bastard* 5", which might be amazing, but for my money the best of the lot when it comes to the final releases is the long overdue vinyl issue of the 2008 *Old Punk Generation* CDEP. The sick raw bass tone and generally noisy production gives the whole thing a nearly hardcore edge, even through traditionally punk numbers like "Oi! Boy Oi! Girl" (which features one of T&BB's very best melodic guitar leads). "I Don't Need Society" churns and chugs like an early NIGHTMARE track through the chorus, joining that hardcore aggression to a classic punky melodic chorus. Great stuff all around! If you write them, ask if they still have copies of the SEPTIC PSYCHOS demo EP they reissued, that's a total classic as well. (Fear of War Records, facebook.com/fearofwarrecords)

For the tour itself, some Boston and New York stalwarts worked together to put of the *Who Wants Panties?* Tour EP, a solid slab of totally stupid punk rock that includes a dumbed-down version of "Oi! Boy Oi! Girl". The number one keeper here is "Oi!"(originally off the split with ROUGH STUFF) which is maybe the dumbest song this band has ever recorded: "Give a fuck / Give a shit / Fuck your head / Go your head / Oi!" Repeat forever, plus two-note lead. Priceless. "Who Wants Panties?" is an epic (by T&BB standards) of sexual frustration that could potentially offend, but as far as I'm concerned getting mad at this band for being shamelessly stupid is kind of like getting mad at your dog for piddling on the carpet. You can do it, but what point does it really serve? (Total Fucker Records, PO Box 82, Somerville MA 02143 / Pogo and Cry, 192 Jefferson St. Apt. 1R, Brooklyn NY, 11206)

Finally, a Russian label put out the *Kill Your Boss* cassette EP, a totally inessential but sweet collection of recent TOM AND BOOT BOYS material. The real treasures here are the demo versions of "Kill Your Boss" and "Mass Stupid" (especially "Mass Stupid," which in this form is an absolute classic). The tape is rounded out by the three best tracks from the *Stupid And Naked Punks Are Running In My House* EP, great songs that are well served by the tape medium. Raw and noisy and (dare I say it?) dumb as fuck. I am seriously considering getting an "I Am OK, You Are Fucker" tattoo at this point. (No Name Records, nonamelabelua.blogspot.com)

Fortunately for punk lifers everywhere Nori-san is not yet ready to retire into his cups, and you can look forward to the imminent debut of ASUKA & THE BUM SERVANTS, where he will be joined by Ricky of EXTINCT GOVERMENT (who also appears on the *Old Punk Generaton* EP), Shinichi (of DISCLAPTIES) and of course Asuka of BEER BELLY fame. Can't wait to hear it! But still, with the passing of TOM AND BOOT BOYS, I think bondange pants are going to feel a little looser, tri-hawks everywhere will be a touch droopier, and beer...well, beer is still going to be fucking awesome. Oi! Oi! Oi!

Japan's own Finnish punk upstarts SOLPÄÄTOS will be supporting ASUKA & THE BUM SERVANTS at their very first gig, and they've got a killer new EP as well! I loved the first EP and, if anything, this is even better. For one thing, they've mixed up the songwriting quite a bit, injecting some UK '77 spit and swagger into the mid-tempo title track, while also throwing down a hardcore rager ("Systeemi") that wouldn't sound out of place on the *Systeemi Ei Toimi* comp. It all comes gloriously together in the final track, "S.O.S.", which is a wild mix of melody and speed that joins an all-time classic chorus to a timeless riff and frenetic lead. It bums me out that this band will probably never get the credit they deserve because they're too obvious about wearing their influences on their sleeves. Sure they're trying to sound Finnish, but they're not biting those riffs or melodies, they're writing great fucking songs and who cares if they're written in the style of other songs written by great fucking bands? Write SOLPÄÄTOS off at your peril, that's all I'm saying. (Hardcore Survives, hardcore-surives.com)

Singapore's CHARGED C.B.H. certainly have no qualms about paying homage to their favorites. These scene vets (members of VAARALLINEN and PAHAZORA among others) are fucking partying like it's 1983. The *No Money* demo is a joyful romp through pretty much every cliché of UK82 style punk besides having a band photo taken in front of a brick wall with charged hair (maybe on the next demo). Obviously most of the licks are off the G.B.H. tootsie pop, but there are some DISCHARGE and BLITZKRIEG references in the mix as well. Fuck originality, this shit is catchier and more fun to listen to than a lot of stuff I've heard lately (try not to sing along to "The Wallet" or "Gimme More"—after a listen or two, you can't!). (Blackhole, subsistencepunk@hotmail.com)

In Philadelphia another gang of vets have banged out a new record, but it's a much darker affair. The BROOD's new EP (*Defective*) is a step forward from their already outstanding demo tape. It's an obvious next step from LOST CAUSE (which featured 3/4 of the BROOD), demonstrating clear influences from the bands that came before (WITCH HUNT, ENDLESS NIGHTMARE and STATIONS, primarily) and possessed of a kind of burning mid-tempo intensity that instantly recalls POISON IDEA as well. The male/female trade offs in the verses themselves are really unique for the style and set the band apart, though there's little potential for a band so set on doing exactly what the fuck they want without regard to trend or tribute to get lost in a sea of similar bands or anything. "Sleepwalking" is my favorite, a simmering, catchy song that builds to an epic conclusion, but everything here is worth the price of admission. Also, since they won't ever take credit for it themselves, I want to give these punks the recognition they deserve for not only putting out their own fucking record in true DIY style, but also producing one that looks and sounds fantastic. There is nothing half-assed here, no cut corners or "good enough" mentality, just great fucking hardcore punk from a band of lifers. (filthybrood138@gmail.com, filthybrood.blogspot.com)

Quick note: the VCR EP is being reviewed elsewhere in these pages. Please, if the review is a good one, ignore the fuck out of it. It is fucking try-hard core of the highest order, complete with cartoon dicks, songs about pizza (really, we're still doing that?!) and an immaculate bit of projection called "Fake Freaks (Fuck Off)". I blame VAGINORS for this nonsense and I want my six dollars back.

Finally, I hate to be a tease, but if you can still somehow track down a copy of the KAFKA demo tape you owe it to yourself to get that shit. The first run sold out instantly, but I was lucky enough to grab a copy of the second run they did to benefit D-Takt & Råpunk Records, and, holy shit, am I floored. The primary draw (for me anyway) was Moto, vocalist of the late and lamented MORPHEME returning to the hardcore fold supported by members of DROPEND. Unfortunately there are only two tracks, but goddamn they're both killers, with a driving Scandinavian sound, sick two/three note leads and, of course, a charismatic slightly reverbed vocal over it all. At the very least, keep an eye out for new material by this band because I'm sure it'll kill. But hell, shoot them an email and see what they say! (kafkaakfak@gmail.com)

That's it for me this month. Can't believe I'm so bummed about TOM & BOOT BOYS breaking up. I probably need another beer…

Write MRR or agundrwood@gmail.com

"Just say 'Oi!,' and get on with it."
—Matthew Lucien Dierker

I was getting off work at the pizza place when I got a call from my buddy Mark. He's from Carbondale, but now lives here in Chicago. We're not the closest of friends—the kind of guy I'd expect a text from, not really a phone call. In fact, I'm 99% sure that was the first time we had ever spoken on the phone in the ten years we've known each other. I was about done with my shift, just doing some cleaning, and I ignored the call knowing that I'd be free to get back to him in about ten minutes. I finished up, went to the back room, grabbed my coat to leave and called him back, "What up, drangus?" "Hey man, I called wondering if you knew how to get a hold of Dierker's parents, he's been in an accident. I guess Teg had a number, so don't worry about it."

Right then, I knew my best friend was dead.

The next few hours were a whirlwind of phone calls, text messages, and using all the best elements of a tight-knit community in order to figure out what the fuck had happened to Matt. At the time, all that was known was that he was found on the side of Old Route 13 in Carbondale, hit on his bike by a vehicle. He was by himself, in a semi-rural area. No one knew when exactly the accident occurred, the extent of the injuries, or where he was. I called and texted people in Carbondale and got such an influx of text messages that it actually almost broke my old ass phone. Eventually it was figured out that the information giving to the police, who had first contacted Teg about Matt's accident, wasn't up to date—or something like that. Matt's family still hadn't been approached.

So I called my dad.

Matt and I had known each other since high school. The way we met was as ridiculous as anything else the two of us ever got into afterward—we were set up on a blind date by our parents. Our little sisters were on the same league soccer team and over time both our families realized that they also both had weird, fat punk sons. So, for whatever reason, they decided to get us to show up to a game, or practice, at the same time and talk. So we did. And being stupid snotty teenaged punks forced together by our lamewad parents, we both immediately branded the other "Poseur." It wasn't until about a year later, once the drummer of the band I was in approached the rest of us about having this guy he met to join on second guitar that we ran into each other again.

He was old enough to drive and had a car. Of course we wanted him in the band.

Off and on for the next seventeen years Matt and I played in various bands and traveled all over. We would rent out civic centers, set up all ages shows at various bowling alleys and roller rinks—we even played our first "real" DIY basement show together in our terrible teenage band Second Class, 11/28/98, in the basement of Seven Dead Arson Records in DeKalb, IL. It was the first show outside of our town,

the first show that we booked through the larger DIY punk network—not just through people we knew personally. A whole new world opened up to us that night. We were both punks before we met, but it wasn't until we got together that we really started getting into what DIY punk, and the greater punk community, was all about.

Our parents still live the town where we went to high school. Pretty much down the road from each other. So when I called my dad to get the phone number for Matt's parents he just opted to get into his car and drive over to their house—it was the first time he had spoken to them in about ten years. He had to break the news that their son had been airlifted from Carbondale to St. Louis.

He didn't make it through the night.

The next week there was a wake in our hometown of Libertyville, IL. No one knew it was going to be open casket until we got there. The next day was his funeral. I didn't know I was going to be a pallbearer until I got there.

Rough.

Matt's influence on the Carbondale punk scene is immeasurable. For a while he was Matt Patches—the kid no one really knew who would make patches in his dorm room of the Lost Cross house logo and give them to people. For the next 15 years he started/joined a slew of bands: the Anti-Socials, I Klatus, the Paintermen, Oops! I Fucked The Pope, the Bourbon Knights, Glower Power, Panic Disorder, the Conniption Fitts, Sprickets, Autonomy. For years you could rely on Matt being at nearly every single show that happened in Carbondale. He would either have booked it, be playing it, be working the door, or just have shown up early/stayed late to clean the basement.

He and his sometimes roommate Brino Vagino even booked the most quickly shut down show in Carbondale—a show for Uzi Rash in the communal basement laundry room of their duplex that lasted eight minutes before the cops busted it. Uzi Rash got to play their whole set and Matt helped give them some extra money out of pocket. For a while he quit playing music to go back to school to become a nurse. In order to stay up on what was going on, he moved into the Skihaus and helped work door at shows there.

Even in death, Matt Dierker outpunked the Carbondale punx. A few years back my girlfriend at the time and I were laying in bed complaining about how ridiculous and self-indulgent destination weddings were. We joked about how when we died we wanted destination funerals. Immediately we argued about which of our bands was going to get to use the phrase "destination funeral" as a song title. The result was that both Not Healthy and Staring Problem ended up with songs named that. We all thought we were hilarious and terribly clever.

Dierker? Well, he actually fucking had one.

Two fingers up, sticking straight out of the grave.

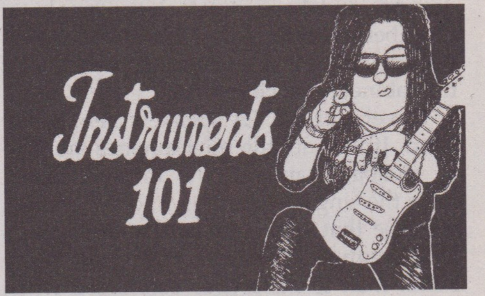
Chances are that if you ever traveled through Carbondale in a band between 1999 and 2014 you met Dierker. If you were around Chicagoland in the mid-late '90s you probably caught him at some bowling alley, VFW, roller rink, civic center show. Or the Libertyville Days parade on Milwaukee Ave. in 1999, jumping off a float with his guitar attacking the crowd with Clash riffs. And even if you didn't meet him, the fact that you're reading this column right now is because he showed me a *Book Your Own Fucking Life* in 1998 and helped get me much more into *MRR* and DIY punk.

November was a real bummer of a month. It seems like everything went to shit, real fucking fast. Everywhere. In so many ways. The right took the government in the midterm elections, the justice system broke itself completely and failed to indict the pigs that murdered Mike Brown and Eric Garner...People are angry, disillusioned, depressed, and exhausted.

Matt Dierker, a curmudgeon if there ever was one, was also the most posi dude ever. He had a post-it note taped above his desk at work that is probably the best outlook on life—a note that I think a lot of people could use reading during these fucked up and utterly disheartening days. Matt lived it until the day he died, and we should all do the same.

"Can't stop. Not dead yet."

ENDNOTES:
1) The punx miss you Dierker.
2) Next month I'll get back to the sketches of columns I was working on before Matt's death: Why beards aren't punk, why defriending people on social media for not agreeing with your outlook on politics is wack, why fascism is unfortunately the most desirable way to live.
3) I know in my last column I stated that I thought that the Bay Area's politics were "steeped [more] out of punk (or other sub-cultures) and [less] out of history and labor." Watching the ongoing protests in Oakland and Berkeley has shown that I could have been quite wrong. I hope that as the struggle continues the solidarity I keep seeing and hearing about, from so far away, persists well after the smoke clears and the dust settles. I have no problem being completely wrong. In this case, I very much hope to be.
4) Best bands I've seen since I've been back: Population, Fuck You Idiot, Shaved Women, Weekend Nachos, La Armada.
5) R.I.P. Township. Another Chicago all ages venue bites the dust.
6) R.I.P. 86 Mets. Another Chicago DIY show space eats it.
7) Welcome back Tom and the Best Show!



Here's some advice for the gigging musician. I learned them all the hard way, so I hope you won't make the same mistakes as I did.

Be on time. Nothing is worse than being late, whether you are the headlining band or the opening act. This is always a pain for everybody. Visiting the city you're in can wait. Just be there on time, set up, and play, or you'll bum everybody out. If you don't follow this simple rule, chances are strong that nobody will ever ask your band to play at their venue.

Pull your stringed instruments out of their cases. Guitars and basses are made out of wood so they'll probably move as a result of the heat and humidity of the venue. If you want your instrument to stay in tune during your gig, and don't want to break a string, put your instrument out of its case or gigbag at least ten minutes before playing it.

Warm yourself up. I admit that you'll look stupid, especially if there is nowhere to hide to do it, but I promise this will help you a lot, and you'll instantly get into the show. So warm yourself up like you're about to go running. Stretch, especially your arms, and exercise your fingers. Keep yourself warm a few minutes before playing. I promise this will change your life. You'll quickly feel the difference. This is especially true for drummers, in order to avoid lock spasms. Also, never let the singer do a show without warming up his or her voice—this is mandatory.

Never go for "plug'n'pray." Some also call this "throw'n'go." This is when you get on stage, plug straight into your amp, and pray that everything will be fine. 99% of the time, it won't be. That's why you should always soundcheck before playing. If you want to hear yourself and your band mates while playing, take some time to set up everything the best way so all the musicians can hear everything. Nothing is worse than one of the instruments being mixed above everything else, especially if it's blasting in your ears. If you don't do it for your band,

at least do it for the crowd. Nobody wants to see and hear a band performing without hearing the guitar or the singer.

On a side note, if you're playing with a half stack cabinet, I recommend that you find some way to lift your cab from the ground, and have it set at the height of your belt. You won't hear yourself at all if it's put straight on the ground, especially if the cabinet has a closed back.

Never put the PA speakers behind the band. If you do, the microphones are sure to feedback, and all the musicians will have the singer screaming into their ears. I promise that it is better to hear no vocals at all, with the PA speakers in front of the band, than to have your ears bleed when they are behind.

Put duct tape on everything. Sometimes miracles happens, and the crowd goes mad over your little band, jumping everywhere. Chaos ensues, and at some point, someone will walk on your instrument cable, your setlist, or your pedalboard. I really hope you'll experience this once in your life, so it's better to be prepared for it. It happened a couple of times to me and a friend was nice enough to come up with this little trick: put duct tape on everything. Your cables, your setlist, your pedalboard, and your microphone, they all have to be held in place if people are jumping in your face, or else you'll discover the sad and terrible feeling of playing strong with your instrument cable down on the ground, with no sound coming out of the speakers. Also, tag everything with your band name. If anything ends up stolen, or if you forget something at the venue, at least you have a small chance of getting it back if it's labeled.

Have a spare everything. Strings, picks, tubes, fuses, cables and even your setlist… Have at least two of everything. If it breaks, you need to replace it in less than a minute or you are out. Also, carry a screwdriver and a wire cutter—these are useful tools that will save your gigs many times. Drummers should always have a drum key with them.

Be kind to the sound person. I must confess, I've been guilty of breaking this rule a couple of times and, to this day, I still regret it. I haven't always been nice to the sound person, and when I wasn't, I could feel his whip slapping my face hard. The truth is that they are the master of the PA, so if you want them to ruin your gig, just be rude to them, and they will. If the person says turn your volume down, just do it, even if it's a pain for you. You can't fight with the sound person, because they'll win every time, so you'd rather be nice and follow their instructions. Just don't be a pain, and everything will be smooth.

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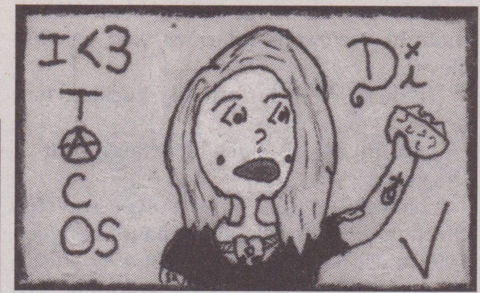


"The Whole Damn System is Guilty as HELL!"

Black Lives Matter.

Black trans women's lives matter. Black Christians' lives matter. Black children's lives matter. Black women's lives matter. Black men's lives matter. Poor black lives matter. Rich black lives matter. Black trans men's lives matter. Black sex worker's lives matter. Black drug addicts' lives matter. Black drug dealers' lives matter. Yes, even black cops' lives matter.

All black lives matter, and it's long past time that white people start to believe this. Because so far in history, this country has operated with the pretense that they do not. It's 2014 and the police still carry out Jim Crow, known by activists as the prison industrial complex, which serves as a new slave labor force powered by black bodies. This system of persecution is and has been carried out by white supremacy and all white people are involved in its maintenance. It's important, finally, that we be an ally in its destruction.

I carefully and intentionally choose the word ally here because while the onus is on us white folks to both personally learn how to be anti-racist, and speak out against others' racism (even when subtle), it is imperative that we step back from the front, and listen to black voices and hear from their mouths and their experiences how we can be a part of creating a future where black lives matter and black folks are finally able to achieve a just existence in this country. We are only furthering white supremacy if we do not listen to black voices, since they are the only ones who know what a society that accomplishes justice for them looks, feels, and operates like.

Being an ally means accepting a role of student and assistant, in a world where white people are taught to be teacher and leader. Being an ally means accepting that some of your ideas are hurtful instead of helpful, despite intentions. Intention is certainly important, but as we have learned in every justice struggle, its actual effect may land harshly. Musicians write songs about trans people and claim to want to lift us up, but often times these attempts only hurt us more, highlighting how ignorant the world is to our lives and needs. If a famous musician wants to be an ally to trans people, they should hire them to be a part of their recording and listen to their input. Right now, being an ally to black Americans means following their lead. As white people, telling communities we are not a part of how to fight, how to protest, how to grieve, how to revolt is none of our business.

A question I hear white people ask all the time is, "So I can't do X so should I just do nothing, since X offended this group?" The only answer I can give is to accept that receiving constructive criticism of your actions is how to become a better ally. It is impossible for white people to grasp in any way what it is like to be black in America, so it is impossible for you to start off as a competent ally. I make no claim to have any more insight than you, and what I write here is all taken from writings by black authors and conversations with black friends over the past year. You will make mistakes, people will call you out. Listen to them and do it differently the next time. Make sure not to gloat about what a "good white person" you are. The article "I Don't Know What to Do With Good White People" by Brit Bennett published on *Jezebel* is a must read for white folks on this topic. Reading articles is a great way to listen to black voices.

I could give my attempt at writing out a how to be an ally manifesto but living my words to truth means sharing the work of someone who has already done so. The article "Becoming a White Ally to Black People in the Aftermath of the Michael Brown Murder" by Janee Woods of *What Matters* blog is a good starting point. An important role of an ally is to learn about the lives of the oppressed, as taught by the oppressed. If you'd rather start your learning with a video, Jay Smooth's vlog post "The Illipsis: On Ferguson, Riots and Human Limits" is a moving and direct breakdown of not suppressing black people and their grief and pain and how "riot shaming" is racist.

Oppression is intersectional, meaning there are a myriad of ways in which a person can face either oppression or privilege. Meaning, a poor white woman may experience class oppression while still benefitting from white privilege. BlackGirlDangerous.org is another great site for articles from black voices on racial justice, feminism, and LGBT struggles as they intersect.

The goal of being an ally is to cultivate solidarity. Solidarity is not a moment in time that you shared pain or power with someone, it is a shared strength; Solidarity is a weapon, one that heals the holder and disarms the oppressor. Right now, solidarity is the most powerful weapon we have against fascist police, fascist government, and the rich. It is through this solidarity we can begin to heal within our radical communities and lead by example the change we wish to see. When we stand on the police line with the reality that black bodies will be arrested, beaten, and jailed far more than white bodies, solidarity for white people means taking an actively supportive role to undo such aggression. For instance, if you see a black person, more so a black woman, even more so a black trans

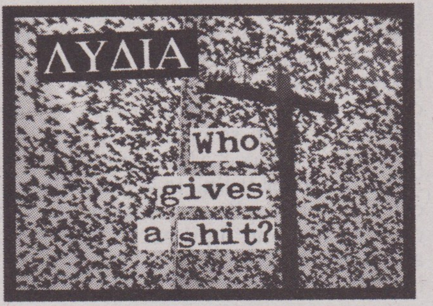
on the police line with the reality that black bodies will be arrested, beaten, and jailed far more than white bodies, solidarity for white people means taking an actively supportive role to undo such aggression. For instance, if you see a black person, more so a black woman, even more so a black trans woman, detained in an unmanned squad car, bust a window and de-arrest those folks. Sometimes the best thing you can do as an ally is just show up.

You may ask yourself, "I'm pretty sure this 'Di V' character is a white girl. Isn't writing a column a form of using ones voice?" Yes, reader, it is. The reality of *Maximum Rocknroll*'s staff right now is we are a vastly white community. I don't want to underscore the importance of amazing black punks making amazing music. Laughing Man, an all-black three piece from DC, just released a stellar record called *Be Black Baby* which is a must listen. Listening to and supporting black punk bands is also crucial to the cause (for additional reading: grab some old *MRR*'s from your restroom archive and read Osa Atoe's column "Shotgun Seamstress" or head over to shotgunseamstress.blogspot.com).

The fact remains, punk is as racist an institution as any other and as a member of the punk community I am using this forum to call it out. There are so many places the voices of the oppressed are missing, and often times, missing from crucial conversations. We live in a country of all-male women's health councils, majority white affirmative action boards, and cisgender led conferences of standards of care for trans health. When you are in a space that has no black voices, and you hear racism, as an ally, you must say something. That's why I am here. White people need to call out racism in spaces where black voices cannot, or will not be heard.

A black friend of mine once said casually on the front porch of the house we lived in together, "I was taught white people are morally bankrupt, and I believe it wholeheartedly." Years of conditioning led me to nearly launch a defensive retort as to why "I am a good white person." I paused, and asked myself what my friend's intentions were. In this instance, he was not saying, "Fuck you, Di" but instead expressing the insurmountable weight of the truth of that statement. In that moment, my friend was taking a scary leap of faith that I would not be just another white person who is too uncomfortable, ignorant, or self-righteous to take in such a statement. This was my friend's truth. Nothing is scarier than such a terrifying truth and the truth is this:

We white people have lived in a country built on slave labor and the imprisonment, devaluing, and destruction of black lives, histories, and cultures. Our society is one so deeply rooted in this that it depends on it. Our laws are built to keep this hierarchy. Our justice system is built to keep this status quo. The system is not broken, it is working perfectly fine as it always has, and the system is racist as fuck. Generations of white communities following and accepting this pattern of oppression have led to a morally bankrupt white race that values the life of a pack of gum over a black teenager. The whole system is guilty as hell and white people are the system. The sooner white communities accept this fact and start to dismantle their own racism, the sooner we can be a positive force for black communities in their struggle to tear this genocidal system down. Burn the motherfucker down.



Mud puddle reflections, or notes on this past year*

• A list-style column can save you time when on a deadline, while still serving as a tool for self-reflection.

• New Year resolution lists are meaningless to people who function with constantly revolving deadlines, on three different timelines, between four different time zones. However, lists are an immense help, if only because they give the swirling chaos inside your head some kind of temporary structure. Entropy is queen, so get used to it.

• Keep notes of every idea you have: future band names, book ideas, song lyrics, arty experimentations, the lot. Most of it will be rubbish, but who knows, one might turn out to be fruitful for something, or work as a solution to an unexpected challenge.

• Always keep a weapon of self-defense, like a baseball bat (or machete…) hidden but accessible by the front door. You never know when someone with unfriendly motives might show up; punks at large were and still are disliked by a lot of people.

• Remember to eat healthily and get at least one day a week of physical and mental rest. Intense work schedules (and too much coffee) will wreck your nerves and most probably affect your output.

• Get familiar with your local post office, watering hole, corner store, and pharmacy. During the busy print and distribution weeks, they could be your go-to saviors.

• But don't get into the habit of liquid lunches or Guinness for dinner! Day drinking gets more appealing with age but hangovers last twice as long.

• Stretch, at least twice a day. Bad posture is modern torture.

• Punks is organization, punks is respect, punks is nerds, at least in this line of work. I resent the notion that being respectful, tidy, and thoughtful towards your comrades are characteristics only of squares. Do as you would be done by. Kindness can go a lot further than disdain.

• Working where you live can quickly turn into living where you work—and that can lead to working all the time. If you don't stay organized and committed to balancing your time between your work life and your personal life, you could end up feeling drained and eventually even bitter or resentful.

• Initial and label your shit. It's crazy how many updates certain projects need, and how often things change: deadlines, group Excel sheets, inventories that live on a cloud, common schedules and calendars, documents and contracts. Keeping track of updates will help keep things on track and in check. Plus it will help you retain some sanity amidst all the emails flying back and forth. It also increases accountability for projects that many people work on and lessens the chance of financial damage.

• Distance and downtime for reflection and revitalization are imperative. If you have the opportunity, don't waste it. Others aren't so lucky.

• Remaining committed and following through with what you said you would do is probably the hardest challenge when working in a group. Dropping your responsibilities will only burden other members of the group, or slow down, even jeopardize, the group's goals. In either case, it creates a negative outcome and someone else is going to have to "get the snake out of the hole" as we say back home.

• Being honest and transparent makes life so much easier. Like Mark Twain said, "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything." Covering up our mistakes is one way of dealing with the fact that we don't want to own up to making them, whether it's because we fear being reprimanded, or because we don't want to admit that we are failing in some capacity at something, but it could lead to a larger mess eventually.

• Asking for help may feel like admitting defeat, but spreading yourself too thin will also eventually lead to burnout or sloppiness. Be brave, be calm and face the facts; you'll handle the situation much better for it.

• Recognizing what hinders you, or others, and finding ways to move past it, can be liberating. It's like an "Oh, I *get* it!" moment when things click into place. We're all somewhat jarred or dysfunctional in our own way; learning to work with what we've got on ways to better improve ourselves can also help us learn more about who we are and thrive as a result.

• Getting thrown in at the deep end is not the best, but it's not necessarily the worst either. Some lessons you *have* to learn the hard way. Trial by fire, as the epic Satan song is called. A thick skin has its virtues.

• Say what you mean, mean what you say. If someone made you feel like shit or did something to tick you off, tell them. Bottling up frustration won't make you feel better (energy never disappears, merely transfers) and it's possible they were unaware of their

actions. Do as you would be done by and have the integrity to be honest about your feelings.

• Don't assume anything about anyone or anything. Assumption is the mother of all fuck-ups! Equivalently, make sure you set your boundaries. Some people will take that mile after you give them that first inch—in some cases just to test or spite you. Fuck 'em, life is short.

• Just because someone isn't speaking up about something, or voicing their opinion on a subject, doesn't mean they don't have something to say. Silence is not always consent or ignorance. Silence can be reflection, doubt, mindfulness, even a flashback to a darker time.

• The right to freedom of speech doesn't always come with the ability to do so. Same goes for the right to self-expression and self-determination. Check your privilege blinkers.

• If you don't actually care for someone or something, don't waste energy and saliva on it. Instead, spend that energy on building and empowering your community and the people you care about.

• Records are not the be all and end all of punk. Don't let anyone make you feel like any less of a punk just because you are not a record collector. Record collecting is in so many ways a privilege. (No dis on all the people who worked hard to build their beautiful collections. Kudos.)

• When it comes to your own creative output, follow your own rules, even if that means no rules at all. Being creative and experimental is one of the greatest engagements punk has to offer us; don't let someone else dictate your aesthetic or style. Don't think outside the box; just get rid of the box completely.

• It's easy to let our bruised or inflated egos get in the way of positive change, tainting us with self-righteousness, jealousy or selfishness. Sharing (knowledge, experience, a cup of coffee) is caring. It's about cooperation not competition.

• Lastly, fuck the outsider critics and don't let anyone put you down. They weren't there fixing the problem, pulling all-nighters, constantly picking up the slack; you were. If you worked your ass off to do everything to the best of your abilities given the situation and available resources, then everyone else can shove it.

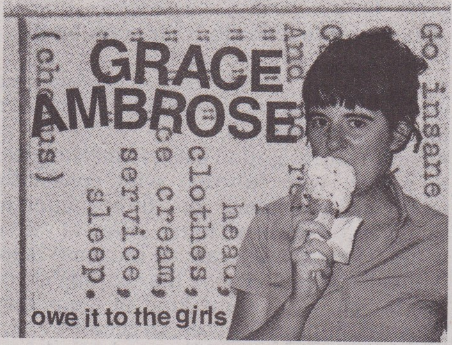
(*) All views and observations voiced above are solely those of the author and no one is exoected to agree with them. Judge your own fucking life.

ENDNOTES:

There is no way you have not read or heard about the tragic and disturbing events that took place these last few weeks in the US. The discrimination, oppression and violence against people of color by the police (and by extension the state and white elite), this racism and plague of white supremacy, they are but components to the larger scheme of systematic domination. If there is something we can do as punks, as a community, it would be to offer our respectful support and solidarity in whatever way is asked of us. Not only so that the oppressors can see that we are not in fact divided, but also, mainly, so that communities of color can know that we stand by them in their fight. May these horrible times not drain our hope, but instead fuel our anger. "I believe in justice. I believe in vengeance. I believe in getting the bastard!"

I think of all the people of color who lost their lives here in the US, on their way home, unarmed, and shot for not being white. I think of all the people outside the US, who lose their lives on their immigration journey here, trying to get to "the land of the free." I think of those battling with their lives to preserve their indigenous lands in South America, and those losing their lives on makeshift floats crossing the Mediterranean, washing up on the coasts of Italy and Greece. The people trying to escape war-ridden countries through deserts and land mines. People dying in Frontex cells on some border, imprisoned for being a "xenos," a foreigner, an outsider. All of them just trying to get to a place they can call home… Be safe dear readers, love one another, and fight back. "Fool's won't and dead men can't."

lydia@maximumrocknroll.com



In the 24 hours between sending the cover of this magazine to the printer and writing this column, Brandon Tate-Brown was shot in the head during a traffic stop in Philadelphia. Another Black man killed by a cop. In the time between my writing this and you reading it, there are guaranteed to be more like him. The list of names on the front cover this month was compiled by the NAACP Legal Defense fund. Seventy-five unarmed men, women, and children of color murdered by pigs in this country this century. Something's gotta give.

Maximum fucked up last month. We're saddled with a gigantic debt—the printer is holding the pdf of this issue hostage as I type. "Pay up or fuck off." If you're reading this, it means we made it through to the other side. In the middle of November we planned an end-of-month sale—make capitalism work for us for once, ya know? *Maximum Rocknroll* isn't Walmart, participating in the punk economy isn't the same as continuing to bankroll exploitative multi-national corporations. Of course, on November 24th, with the non-indictment of Darren Wilson, everything changed—or rather, everything was thrown into relief. In the midst of working, protesting, and making the magazine happen we still went forward with the sale, rather than standing in solidarity and #blackingout Black Friday. We panicked. We had been counting on that influx of cash and we didn't know how to make it happen otherwise—in the moment, it felt like there was no alternative. It was a mistake, and one that highlighted two things for me. The more obvious: the instability of radical self-publishing in a world that is increasingly inhospitable to it—we live this, and it isn't going to change anytime soon. The magazine needs to develop some new strategies for dealing with it. We need to protect ourselves from reaching the point of desperation, protect ourselves between having to make choices between survival and solidarity.

The second is more serious. If *MRR* is going to continue to claim to be a radical publication we need to take drastic steps to be more inclusive, to amplify the voices of marginalized people, and to actively work to dismantle white supremacy here in the punk scene. Those of us directly involved with the magazine need to have some difficult conversations and explore the reasons why this institution has a largely white, largely male staff, and why the content often skews in that same direction. We need our readers to hold us accountable for this: call us on our bullshit, demand that we make our politics manifest on these pages. Being all-volunteer and profit-ambivalent and DIY-as-fuck does not absolve us—we are still guilty of perpetuating the many of same oppressive structures as the normal world, but the studs and leather somehow make it a little easier to swallow. Punk was presented to me as an opportunity to participate in something that does not mirror the everyday. It is time to get to work.

grace@maximumrocknroll.com

ENDNOTES:

1) Some truly radical self-publishing that inspires and informs me: *Destroy the Scene: Bros Fall Back*, a frank and aggressive treatment of the politics of "cool" and racism, gentrification, and "bro" behavior in the West Philadelphia punk scene; *Shotgun Seamstress*, Osa Atoe's zine for, by, and about Black punks, which is available in its collected form from Mend My Dress press; the Metropolarity writing crew, who produce Afro-centric speculative science fiction publications and readings in Philadelphia.

2) It feels difficult to ask for help when the world around us is so monumentally fucked, but this is your friendly reminder that all donations to *MRR* are tax deductible (if that's your thing!). All info at maximumrocknroll.com/donate. We also accept your dirty sock filled with change, well-concealed cash, bitcoins, checks, money orders, and simply words of encouragement.

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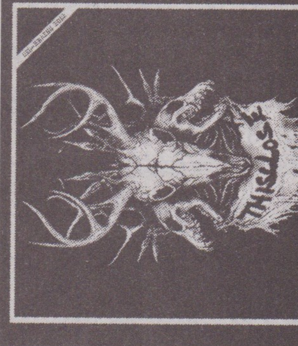

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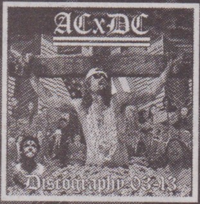

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Austin, Texas weirdout powerviolence hardcore group put together their opus. Think Gasp meets Swans meets Killing Joke all blended with some Man Is The Bastard.

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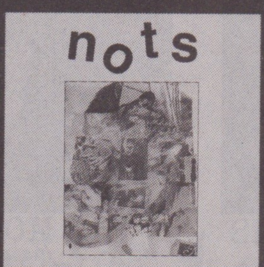

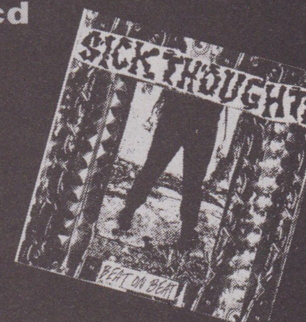

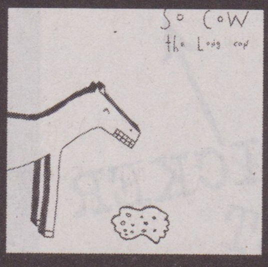

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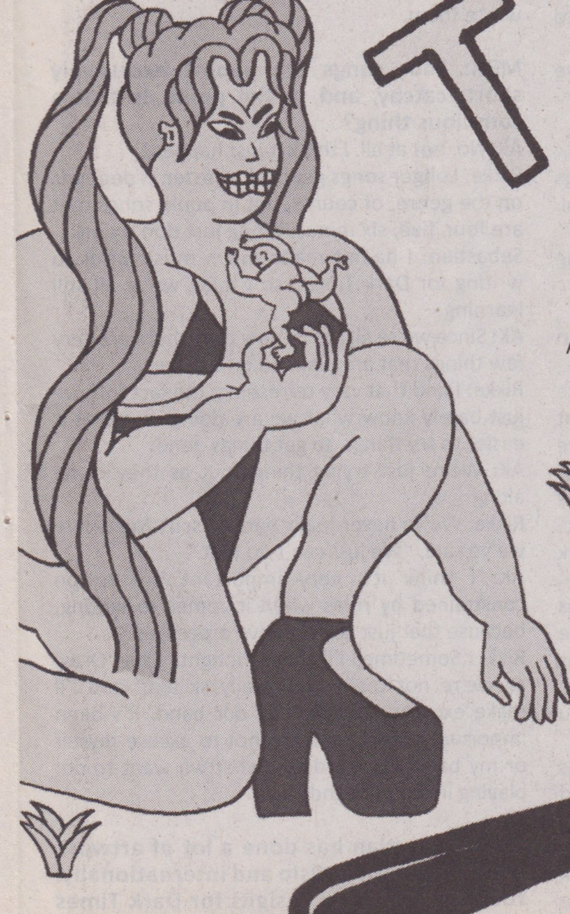
GONER RECORDS

It's been nearly three years since MRR last spoke to hard-hitting Norwegian No Wave rockers Dark Times. An array of things have happened in the life of this genre-bending band since April 2012: a second 7", European touring, even further international critical acclaim, and a debut full-length, not to mention an absurd, yet sadly tendentious, encounter with sexism in music journalism. It's high time we sat down with Sebastian, AK, and Rikke to find out what the band has been up to as of late. Introduction and questions by Henrik Sanne Kristensen. Photos provided by Torgeir Nordbø and Marius Eriksen. Artwork by Maren Karlson.

DARK TIMES



Artwork by Maren Karlson

Dark Times is
AK: Guitar and vocals
Rikke: Drums
Sebastian: Bass

MRR: Congratulations on the recently dropped full-length. I've heard rumors about it being recorded in somewhat unorthodox surroundings; what was the deal?
Rikke: We really wanted to record it all in one place, in order to not have mundane things such as school or work disrupt us in the middle of the process—so we took time off and travelled to the smallest place on the face of the earth.
AK: It was recorded in a house—or a log cabin, rather. It was built in 1693, and it belongs to my family on the farm where I grew up.

MRR: Did the surroundings and the location impact the sound of the album at all?
AK: No, not really. The songs were already written and ready for recording.
Rikke: It just gave us the opportunity to focus and not be disturbed for the weekend it took to record. When we weren't busy recording, Sebastian pretty much spent most of his days playing an old pump organ that was sitting in the cabin. The place was really cool.

MRR: Reading the lyrics for the new record, I get a sense that several songs describe being surrounded by "fakes" and grappling with disingenuous people who are trying to be something they're not. At the same time, Dark Times are considered members of a rather exclusive gang of artist friends, often referred to as Black Hole Crew,

Photo by Torgeir Nordbø

who all seem very supportive of each other. Who are all these fakers you are describing, then?
AK: Both Rikke and I write the lyrics for Dark Times.
Rikke: I think that those lyrics are reflecting back on us, in a way. For instance, at times you might accuse somebody else of something, when in fact you are mostly annoyed at yourself. Unfortunately, it's easy to take it out on somebody else when you are having problems of your own.
AK: I've written lyrics about fakers in the past, about being out in Oslo on a Saturday night where you feel very consciously out of place, outside of this drunken humanity raging around you.

MRR: AK, do you find it weird singing lyrics written by Rikke?
AK: Definitely. In the beginning it was weird, but I got used to it.

MRR: Do you tell AK what the songs are meant to describe when you give her your lyrics?
Rikke: I suppose it happens, but they are usually rather cryptic notes. I do find it rather weird, handing my lyrics over to somebody else for them to sing.

MRR: It also seems as if some of the new songs are about growing up and having more responsibilities. Am I completely off here?
AK: Some of the songs that I've written are about being stuck in the groove of doing the same thing everybody else is doing, what is expected of you and what is tradition. They are about realizing that those things might not be right for you, but struggling to break out of that inherent structure. I think there are a lot of people who can relate to those things.
Rikke: We used to be angrier, in a way. Now we are more critical of ourselves.
AK: You mean in our lyrics?
Rikke: Yes.
AK: That's probably true. I think the new songs are more self-reflective than our earlier material. We used to be like, "They are so fucking stupid!"
Rikke: Now we're more like, "Why am I so fucking stupid?!"

MRR: Where do you think this change in perspective comes from?
AK: I'm not sure. Maybe you naturally turn more self-reflective with age? Ha, we weren't that young writing our first songs, so I don't think we can blame youthful negativity.
Rikke: Maybe we weren't young in age, but we were young in the process of making music. None of us had made music prior to forming Dark Times.
AK: Some of the songs might be interpreted as being angry because they *sound* like they are angry. "Be Your Own," for instance, is meant as a pep talk, saying "Come on, do what you want, start a band, write a book, or whatever you want."
Rikke: That is also what the album title *Give* is referring to—give what you can and never mind what others are saying.
AK: There has been some talk of how young people today are always expected to, or think they need to, appear perfect. They say more people struggle with depression today than used to be the case before. I don't know if that is true, though. But I think it's more important that other people get something out of my lyrics than figuring out what I was thinking when I originally wrote them.

MRR: Your songs are almost exclusively short, catchy, and to the point. Is that a conscious thing?
AK: No, not at all. I think it just happens.
Rikke: Longer songs get boring faster. It depends on the genre, of course, but in punk, songs that are four, five, six minutes long just don't work.
Sebastian: I hadn't made much music prior to writing for Dark Times, so I think we're all still learning.
AK: Since we're all pretty new to it, there are very few things that are planned on our part.
Rikke: I find that very refreshing; the fact that we just barely know what we are doing. It makes it easier to try things, to get things done.
AK: We're just trying things out as they come along.
Rikke: We've never really had a discussion where we've said, "We just can't do that."
AK: I think it's very important not to be constrained by rules when it comes to writing, because that just kills creative processes.
Rikke: Sometimes I'll think thoughts like, "Okay, so we're not really technically skilled," and I'll make excuses on behalf of our band. It's been important for me to learn not to excuse myself or my band for just doing what we want to do: playing in a punk band.

MRR: Sebastian has done a lot of artwork for bands, both in Oslo and internationally. You also did some designs for Dark Times in the past. How come you didn't do art

for Dark Times' previous 7" *Girl Hate* or for the new record?
Sebastian: I've never quite felt that what I do fits that well with our band. I did the first 7" cover, and it works, but then we met Maren Karlson, who booked us in Berlin and did a poster for that show. We all completely fell for her style of drawing. I think AK and Rikke were hesitant to bring it up with me, since I was doing the artwork at the time, but I had already thought that her style would be perfect for our music.

MRR: How was the process of working with her?
Sebastian: She pretty much does exactly as she pleases.
Rikke: We sent her our lyrics, as they were ready, and then she worked with those.
AK: She came up with an idea for this album; we thought it was a great one, and then we just went with it, ha ha. We didn't revise any of it.
Rikke: What I really like about the cover we got for the album, and also the last time around, for the *Girl Hate* 7", is that Maren carries a burden for us in her drawings. Her style is kind of an "in your face" one, a lot tougher than we've ever dared to be. It's really awesome because she's confrontational and unapologetic in what she does, and I really like that a lot. It's nice when someone is pushing in the same direction; and pushing even harder, if you know what I mean.

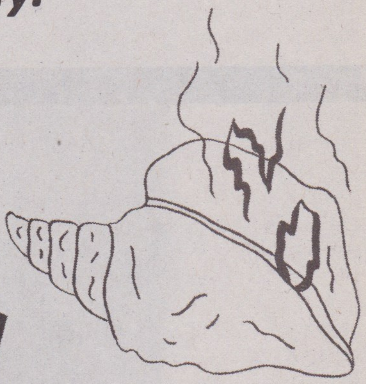
MRR: Speaking of the *Girl Hate* 7"—there's something that seemingly always comes up when people talk to Dark Times... Are you tired of always discussing gender and feminism in interviews?
Rikke: Yes and no.
AK: It all depends on what the angle is. What frustrates and annoys me is that we always keep getting referred to as a "girl band." For instance, when we went on tour, at least half of all the flyers and events described us as "girl-fronted" or "female-fronted," which says nothing about us and is not important. I can talk about it on a personal and political level, but it doesn't have anything to do with the music that we write.
Rikke: At the same time, it could be a positive thing if girls think, "Oh, they're girls? I'm going to listen to them; I need to find more people who are like me and who share my interests." I don't know, something like that.
AK: I've always been a little uncertain as to whether or not I find it okay for people to describe us like that. I've just become really tired of people always referring to us as "girl" this, "female" that. What I am, in fact, interested in discussing is whether we can manage to inspire young girls, and boys for that matter, to form their own bands.
Rikke: You can't suppress that, either. You can't just sit and wait for awful attitudes about these things to disappear and for things to resolve themselves.

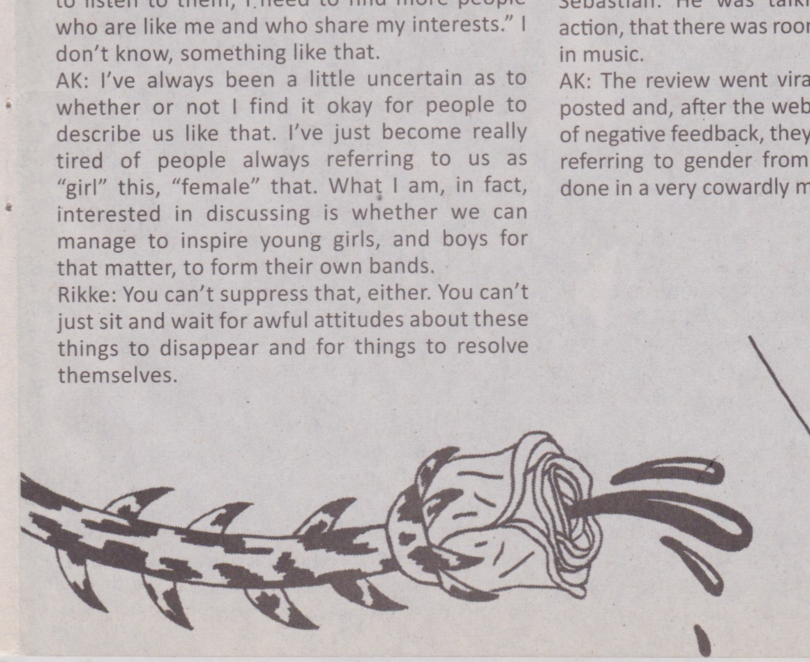
MRR: I sympathize with you, and I can understand how it must be disheartening when people who write about you always have to use language linked to gender. But just to explain, it feels important to me to discuss this subject with you because, AK and Rikke, you two were definitely my doorway into the world of feminism, working with you on a music show on the student radio station here in Oslo even before Dark Times happened. It was while working with the two of you that I became aware of all these messed up things in our language, lazy things people say that help maintain tired old stereotypes, bullshit inanities that hold no truth. I bring this up because something happened in conjunction with the release of the *Girl Hate* 7" that *MRR* readers outside of Norway probably didn't catch—a strange and depressing review.
AK: That review was an example of the worst possible way to refer to music as something that is connected to gender. It was based on the idea that 1) we sucked; and 2) we were a girl band, even though we are in fact not. The journalist meant that it was unfair that we, as a girl band, had gotten so much attention, because there were so many other girl bands that were better. I was the worst "female vocalist" he had ever heard. We sucked and we didn't deserve the attention *because* we were a girl band.

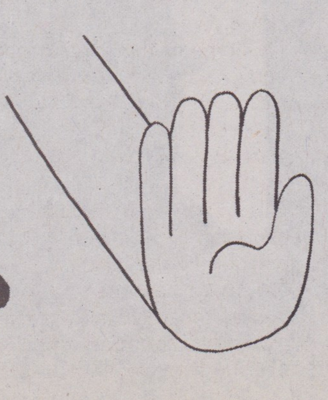
...there are still a lot of people who have yet to wake up and realize that the language they are using is obsolete and not okay.

Rikke: He had posed this very clear distinction: we are now talking about girls who play music, and that is a whole other world. This world has nothing, apparently, to do with males who play music.
Sebastian: He was talking about affirmative action, that there was room for only so many girls in music.
AK: The review went viral the same day it was posted and, after the website had gotten hordes of negative feedback, they removed all the words referring to gender from the article. It was all done in a very cowardly manner.

MRR: There has been lots of talk about affirmative action in music here in Norway since then, and it generally seems that feminism is on the agenda a lot more often recently. Have you experienced a change since the review was posted back in 2012?
AK: I felt sorry for that journalist, because he obviously just didn't understand our music, and he didn't understand what he had done. What happened in the aftermath was that gender in music was discussed in depth, and over the past year there have been several debates and critical discussions regarding gender balance in music in general. I definitely feel like things have happened. People are more conscious, and that is great.
Rikke: But the fact that those kinds of reviews still keep popping up is symptomatic of the fact that there are still a lot of people who have yet to wake up and realize that the language they are using is obsolete and not okay.
AK: It seems like it happens often in music journalism that linguistic inanities like these become apparent, but I think more and more music journalists are waking up to this. I think it is absolutely imperative that we change the way we speak in order to combat the way female musicians are presented.
Rikke: It's something that people just need to realize, just like we've moved on from using







Artwork by Maren Karlson

other offensive words that people might not appreciate. Like, "Maybe I shouldn't use 'girl group' when I'm describing music."
AK: The more we talk about it, and the more influential people bring it up, the more people will become aware of it and change their ways.
Rikke: One very interesting notion that comes to mind as we're discussing this is that we are in fact *not* a girl band. We are two female musicians and one male musician. It is just as unfair for Sebastian that this is always the focus—"Oh my god, ladies playing rock!" It's not fair to him. "Here I am, sorry..." It's a perfect example of unfair stereotyping affecting all parties in a negative way.

MRR: Who do you think even launched the idea of Dark Times being a girl band?
Rikke: I've pondered this: what if we were in fact four people, and the fourth member was a second guy? The fact that we are one-more-girl makes people generalize.
AK: I doubt that it would even be a big deal if we were two girls and two guys.
Rikke: No one is referring to those bands as "girl bands." As soon as the number of women outweighs the men, then it's a "girl band."
AK: It's not like it's a genre. It's merely the fact that "those girls are playing a genre of music that girls don't *usually* play."
Rikke: I almost feel bad sometimes because I'm not sure whether I'm imagining that people have prejudices like that, or if I myself am in fact fulfilling or living up to these prejudices, because I'm practically waiting for them to happen. For instance, when I go on stage I have a certain self-awareness—I know that [the audience] is seeing us, and it makes me wonder what they are thinking. And you'll have certain experiences where it becomes apparent what people think about women as musicians—if there will be a girl band playing, it's definitely not going to be as cool. It makes me self-aware, and I wonder if people in our audience are thinking those thoughts. Maybe it is *as* dumb for me to be thinking those thoughts?
AK: I don't really worry about that in those kinds of settings.
Rikke: Well, we're sitting here talking about people as if they are prejudiced against female musicians—maybe they are, maybe they are not. Sometimes I almost fear that it's going to become a self-fulfilling prophecy if we talk too much about it.
AK: I think about it more in writing, like in music criticism and stuff. When we're playing shows, I don't think that much about it. I have not experienced that prejudice too often, aside from a few sound guys who have acted a bit rude or ignored us.

MRR: Speaking of playing live, you went on a short European tour last year, and also did a show in London. What does the future hold for Dark Times as far as touring goes?
Rikke: We're going to the major cities in Norway this fall.
AK: And we're working on a short European tour.
Rikke: If someone wants to pay for our entire US tour, that'd be great, he he!

MRR: What makes a good Dark Times show in your minds?
Sebastian: When I stop hating the audience, then it's maybe an extra good show.
Rikke: Do you hate that they are there, or do you hate *them*?
Sebastian: I don't know, it just happens naturally when I'm about to play a show. But that also happens when I'm watching a show as an audience member.
AK: The times that I've felt like we did a really good show are also when I haven't noticed the audience because I was so focused.
Rikke: Sometimes if the audience members are behaving really badly that'll piss us off. That can motivate me to play better because I figure it doesn't really matter. Why am I here, and why are *you* here if you don't like us?

MRR: What is going on in Oslo these days that people need to check out?
Rikke: No doubt in my mind, Svart Samtid, booking shows like there's no tomorrow. If it hadn't been for Håvard, I'm not sure what the hardcore scene would've looked like.
AK: I also think the band Pox needs to be checked out.
Sebastian: Kommunalt Svømmeanlegg is a band from Oslo/Trondheim. They are really, really good.

MRR: What else inspires you to be creative, as individuals or as a band?
AK: I get very inspired by people I know who do things, who make things happen. It makes me want to give everything when I play live, and to write more songs. I'm also inspired by art and books that I read. Crossing genres in different art forms inspires me.

Full-length album Give out *now on Sheep Chase Records. Contact Dark Times at darktimesoslo@gmail.com.*

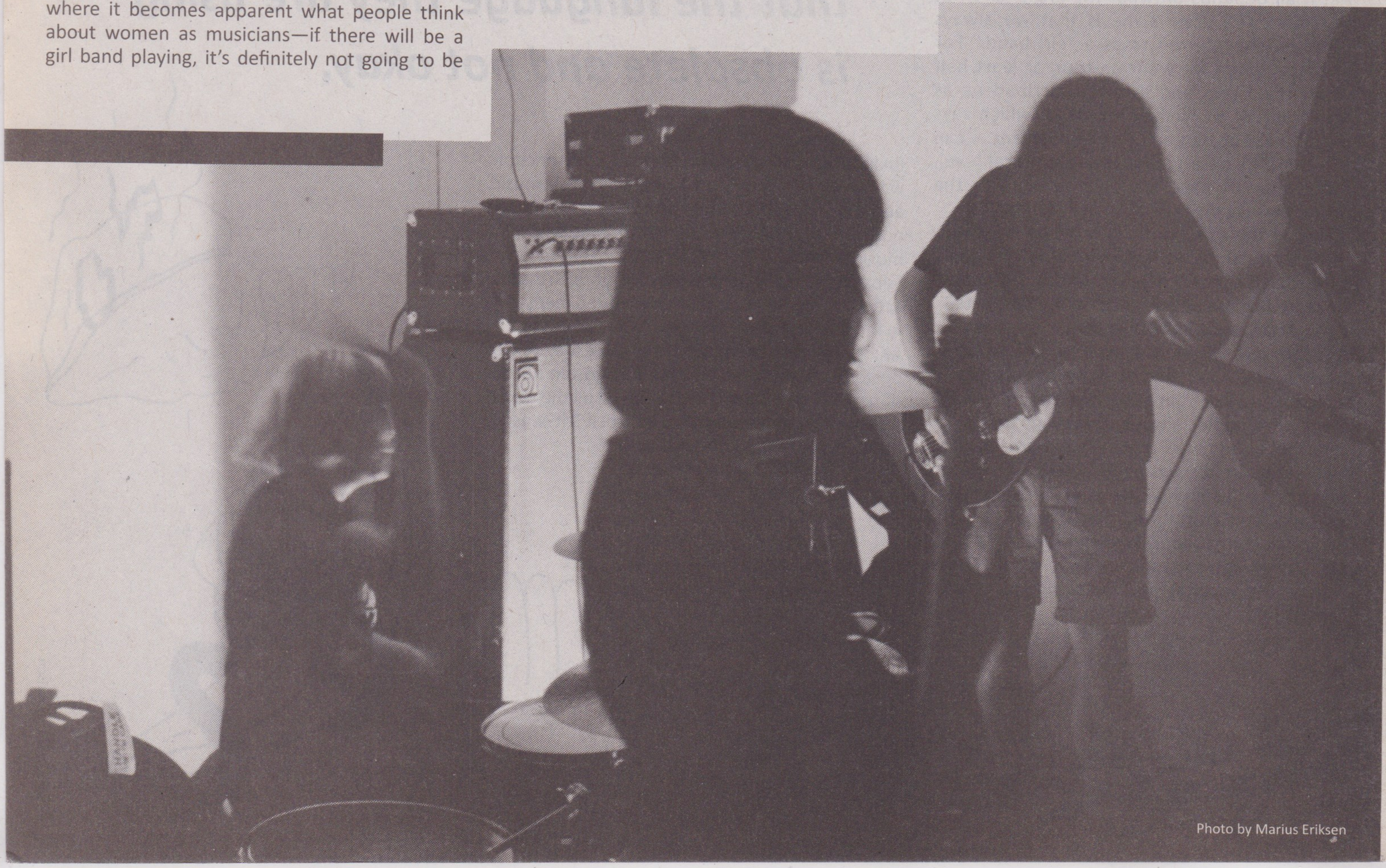


Photo by Marius Eriksen

WICCANS

Blasting out of the basements and taquerias of North Texas, Wiccans is a hardcore punk band that will make you tear the sound-proofing mattress off the wall and ride it like a boogie board over a crowd of mutants. I caught up with three of five members at the Super 8 hotel in Downtown Toronto during Not Dead Yet Fest 2014. Despite sub-zero temperatures, they played a scorching set at Hard Luck the night before our interview.
Interview and introduction by Jason Rigas. Photos by Angela Owens and Renate Winter.

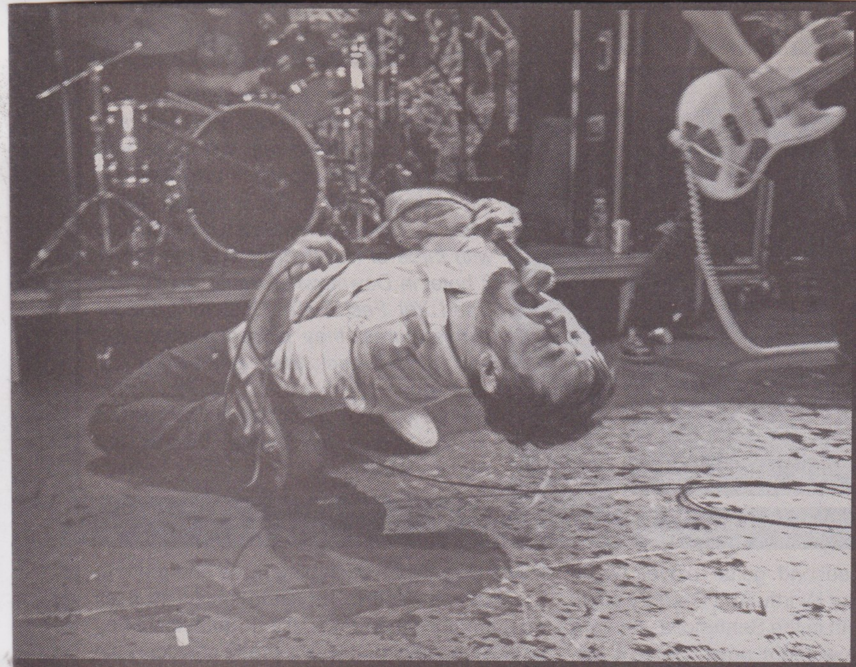
MRR: Please state your name, what you do in the band, your age, and where you're originally from.
Adam: Adam, I sing, 31, from North Texas, which is where all of us met.
Payton: Payton, I play guitar, one of two guitarists, and I'm 27. I'm from kind of all over but I lived in Denton for like ten years, in North Texas. Spent the biggest chunk of my life there.
Harpal: I'm Harpal, I play bass, 28, and I was born in England, lived there for eight years, but I'm from the Dallas area. I live in Austin now.

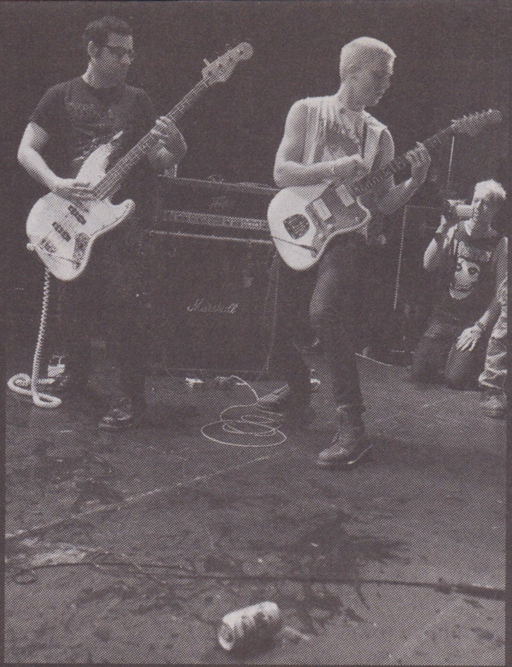
MRR: And who are the other two members who are missing?
Payton: Shea Michael Brooks, the other guitar player, the third second guitar player we've had. He is from Fort Worth. And Gregory plays drums. They're both in the Sentenced, who are playing a day show [right now]. Shea is 24, Gregory's 27 and Gregory's also from North Texas.

MRR: So the band is based in Denton, right?
Payton: Originally, but now two of us live there again. We usually practice there because I live in Oklahoma City now and these guys live in Austin so we kinda meet in the middle spot.

MRR: I'm curious about Denton, 'cause I know that it's a suburb of Dallas, right?
Payton: Yeah, it's becoming more and more of a suburb. It used to be kinda set off to itself as a small college town. It's 45 minutes away so until recently that was a pretty considerable distance from Dallas and Fort Worth. Now going to Fort Worth there's still a lot of open space, but from Denton to Dallas it's just constant suburbs.
Adam: It's a small college town. There's a downtown square. It's almost like *Back to the Future*, with a clock tower and a courthouse.

MRR: But there are a lot of notable bands from there.
Adam: Oh yeah. There's a house show scene. I guess it's been compared to Jersey and the





house show scene there.
Payton: Yeah, that house show scene has gone through a few iterations over time. There was a big thing in the '90s, which the bands that eventually became Marked Men and the Reds started off with. Mid '00s there was a pretty good house show scene that we were a big part of that kinda slowly died. There were like seven houses at one point all doing shows.
Adam: Some nights you could go to three different houses for different kinds of shows. Like a noise house, a punk house, and then kinda whatever houses—
Payton: Yeah, that would do anything. And that was a really great time. I'm sure there are kids doing stuff there now. I'm just out of touch with younger kids.

MRR: So what is the relationship between the Denton scene and the Austin scene' which would be the foremost Texas punk scene?
Adam: No house shows. Very rarely.
Payton: They get shut down really quickly. There used to be a lot though.
Adam: There're no DIY spaces. There've been a few in Denton that have popped up.

MRR: Do you guys go there a lot? To Austin?
Payton: Adam and Harpal both live there. I go there all the time. I'm moving there in June because I'm tired of driving forever from OKC to go to Austin. But the scene is pretty decent. It used to be a lot more interconnected and it is again now, sort of. There are a lot of new bands, especially hardcore, like the Sentenced, which Greg and Shea play in, and Sin Motivo, which Shea also plays in.
Adam: When we first started there was not much of a hardcore scene in Austin really. We would play with garage rock bands. And there were not people coming to the shows for the first two years.
Payton: They did not give a shit.

MRR: About your band specifically?
Payton: Yeah about our band specifically, people just did not care.

MRR: Why do you think that is?
Adam: It's just kind of a lull, where like the older punks move on and then there's a space until the younger kids come up.
Payton: And people in our age group were not, at the time, particularly interested in hardcore I feel like, until—
Adam: We just played one show and there were like 300 people out of nowhere and we were like "WTF?" and everyone was just throwing trashcans and smashing chairs.
Payton: We played a show with Women In Prison that was just an awesome show, and then I don't think we've had a bad show in Austin since.
Adam: I guess the younger kids started coming out and starting bands and getting interested. And then the whole new thing developed, with bands like Glue and Recide.

MRR: So the stratification of punk with sub-genres is getting really crazy. Where do you guys see yourselves? Is this something you even want to participate in, as far as categorizing the band? Do you have a scene that you guys feel you represent?
Adam: We kinda never really fit in with that. And we're bad at networking.
Payton: We were never like the cool guys or anything. We're always kind of, I dunno, so weird. It's a weird thing. But I think we're just a punk band.
Adam: I think some people come to see it and then after hearing the music they see us and they're like: "Oh, you're wearing Western shirts and you all have glasses and you're all short."
Payton: Yeah we're nerds. We're nerds about books and sci-fi. I think all of us listen to '70s hard rock and free jazz and shit more than we listen to hardcore.
Harpal: We're all into Blue Öyster Cult.
Adam: We're not into swinging chains and knives or anything. Not good punk gear.
Payton: We're pretty low-key.
Harpal: There aren't many all-ages spaces in Austin. That's a problem I think. There's not much house stuff. There're just like four or five main venues—
Payton: That everybody's played a thousand times.

MRR: However, there are also a lot of fests in Austin. That's something I wanted to talk about, considering that we are at Not Dead Yet right now. I mean, last night I was pretty exhausted and I was feeling sick, coughing a lot, going back and forth to Tim Hortons all night.
Payton: Us too. All night.

MRR: It's kind of an intense thing and now there's this festival phenomenon in punk worldwide.
Payton: Yeah, especially now that Chaos in Tejas is not a thing anymore. That was the destination and so now I think everybody's trying to do their own version of that. New York's Alright was really fun this year. That was maybe the craziest show we ever played [at Le Poisson Rouge with Infernöh, Crazy Spirit, Murderer, Gas Rag, and Stoic Violence].

MRR: How do you feel about playing festivals versus playing a four band house show with one touring band and three locals?
Adam: You always go for that. [But at a fest] you get to see all these people from all over. But at the same time they can't get in to see you most of the time.

MRR: Maybe that's the function of a fest though. It's for people who want to see everything in one weekend. But people on the internet have been making posts like, "If you don't go to shows in your town and you only go to fests, fuck you!" Do you guys think that's a real thing at this point; with people touring the festival circuit and then not really investing in their local scenes?

Payton: I dunno, it depends. I'm kinda getting to an age where I can see both sides. I feel like I definitely don't go to as many shows as I used to in any particular town that I live in. Because sometimes I don't wanna go see a band on a Tuesday, I wanna go to bed. I wanna read a fantasy novel and pass out. And so sometimes a fest is a good thing. Just to go for one weekend and see as much as you can. But at the same time, it's too much. When I'm done with a fest, I can't listen to music for like two weeks. Can't even deal with it at all, so it's kinda overkill for me. Specifically at Chaos it'd be like, "Okay, I'm gonna see Tear It Up, and then I'm gonna go see the Clean, and Thomas Jefferson Slave Apartments."

Adam: It was pretty diverse actually.

Payton: Super diverse. I didn't get quite as burned out from Chaos because you'd see something different at any given time. But then at fests like this one, it's great for everything to just be in the same vein, but I get really exhausted really fast.

Adam: There're diverse patches, though. Like Puce Mary played, which I really wanted to see but couldn't get into.

MRR: That's heartbreaking.

Adam: Yeah, every show that we were on the list for we couldn't get into. And then we couldn't even pay at that point because it was sold out. Except for the shows that we played.

MRR: What do you guys do outside of punk?

Payton: I've been doing a solo country project lately. And then I read a lot and serve tables at a pizza restaurant.

Adam: I do different noise and electronic projects, and hardcore band called Bad Faith, which is the singer of Cold Sweat and the drummer of Impalers.

Payton: He said *outside* of punk.

MRR: It's cool. We could just start with punk and then branch out.

Adam: Well, noise is kind of related.

MRR: Yeah, noise is a full-time job.

Adam: Making noise…Yeah, I work at a sex toy factory, which is a pretty odd thing.

MRR: Are there a lot of other punks that work there?

Adam: [laughs] Yeah.

MRR: There was a dildo factory in SF that a lot of punks worked at.

Adam: It's probably the same one. And then they moved to Texas.

Payton: Wiccans, dildo-makers.

Adam: That pretty much takes up all my time. It's a forty-hour a week job.

Payton: I spent my whole year reading a fourteen-book-long fantasy series, which I just finished. *Wheel of Time*. It's sick. Kinda heartbroken since there's no more.

MRR: Is Texas a relatively easy place to have a band in? Do you feel like you guys can function better than in other places?

Harpal: It's easy to get around, like loading out of venues.

Adam: Almost everyone drives. Public transportation is not the best. It's actually almost non-existent.

Payton: Which kind of facilitates playing music.

Adam: Because you already have a van or a car so you can pick up gear and load gear.

Harpal: Seems a lot easier than NYC, where you rent practice spaces and vans and stuff.

Adam: You can just practice in your house most of the time.

MRR: So the punk community there is pretty small, right? Does everyone know everyone? Are there sub-scenes?

Payton: There are. I mean, it depends how broadly you're branching out I guess.

Harpal: I feel like pop punk is a separate thing in Austin. There're other house shows, like Chest Pain and stuff. They have their own deal.

Payton: There're some things that are kinda segmented. But I guess hardcore in general is for the most part a lot more unified than it used to be, because a lot of kids who grew up super into punk are getting older, and getting into metal now, so they'll go watch a band like Power Trip. And a lot of kids who grew up listening to Power Trip are branching out too, so they'll come see Wiccans. So it's all turned into more of a unified phenomenon.

Adam: It gets further apart, but then somehow it comes even closer.

Payton: It's pretty bizarre.

MRR: Let's talk about how the band started and what the plans for the future are.

Payton: It was me and Andrew [Savage] originally.

Adam: Some of us lived together, off and on. And we had houses that booked shows.

Payton: I had been in hardcore bands always, and Andrew (who's in Parquet Courts now) and I were driving home from a show in Dallas. We'd been talking about doing a hardcore band since we were like seventeen or eighteen together. That was maybe five years ago, and we just went through everyone we knew.

Harpal: You guys had the name already.

Payton: Yeah, Andrew already had the name. He wanted to call it the Wiccans and we dropped the "the." But he and I were the only people in the band who'd ever played in a hardcore band before, which is kinda interesting. And then Adam just started coming to practice and had no idea at all what he was going to do for vocals.

Harpal: He'd never sung in a band.

Adam: I was surprised I was even asked.

MRR: You really seem like such a natural frontman. I assumed that you've only sung in bands, that you've never touched an instrument in your life.

Adam: No, I was playing drums in like a noise band. I don't even know why I got picked. I think Andrew originally wanted to sing, but I became involved because they thought I looked like a singer or something. Probably because I have a beard…

MRR: …and hand tattoos, a button-down shirt.

Payton: We just decided to try it out, and we wanted Harpal to play bass because I really like the way Harpal plays bass. And Gregory had only been in one other band at that point. So we just started playing and then Andrew got really busy with other stuff and ended up moving to New York. And then our friend Daniel played guitar for a few years and we did a lot in that period and then he left, kinda went down a different life path than the rest of us. So he left and Shea joined and at that point we were all scattered.

Harpal: We've been kinda dormant.

Payton: This year we're catching back up. We've got a new record almost done.

MRR: What releases do you guys have so far?

All: We did several tapes, a demo tape that our first seven inch is from. And two LPs.

Adam: This past year I've been writing a lot for this new record. We've been working on that.

MRR: What's your favorite format to work in?

Payton: It kind of depends. Lately mostly Adam comes in with finished songs but previously we'd just come in with a couple riffs and would finish it off as a band.

Adam: I guess there would be gaps and people would get busy with other projects. Because if you have people who are down the street from you, it's a lot easier to get together.

Payton: We used to write together a lot when we lived in the same house. So we'd start other bands.

Adam: They did Video when Andrew moved.

Payton: So Harpal and I both play in that band as well. Video just finished a record, a new LP.

Adam: And then in that space I started Blotter and Institute.

MRR: And you guys have done tours?

Payton: We did a very short Midwest tour and we did two larger Midwest-East Coast tours. Haven't been to the West Coast yet.

MRR: What's your favorite place to play?

Payton: Chicago is really good. Detroit is probably my favorite. Kansas City and St. Louis are great. Detroit is always the best time.

Adam: Which does not have a hardcore scene. We play garage shows.

Payton: Not even garage, just like rock'n'roll weirdos. Weird shit. Detroit is a weird town full of weird people.

Adam: For some reason they like us there.

Harpal: We played with another band called Wiccans there. Not a punk band.

Adam: It was two acoustic guitars and bongos. They lit candles and had spell books.

Harpal: They came to confront us, kind of. The show was billed as "Wiccans vs. Wiccans."

Adam: But then they were like, "You guys are really nice." And then musically it had actually a lot in common, since it was acoustic with bongos but it was almost like Pentangle or Comus or something. Like spooky, heavy folk music. Black Sabbath songs on acoustic guitar.

Payton: And we have enough classic Detroit influence for it to make sense. Lots of Alice Cooper.
Harpal: We had good shows in NYC, too.
Payton: Yeah, New York has always been really great.
Harpal: And New Brunswick.
Adam: I guess that's one of the places that is comparable to Denton. A college town with a house show scene. Maybe not anymore, but there was a point where it was. Denton also doesn't have a whole lot going on right now.
Payton: It's pretty dead.
Adam: Canada's always been really good.

MRR: What about the Taqueria El Picante in Denton?
Payton: That was great. That was a really short lived but amazing thing. This guy Sven, who's a friend of mine, started running a taqueria for his parents. Then he started wanting to have shows.
Adam: He didn't seem to care if somebody went through a wall or if the register got knocked over.
Payton: The first show I played there was an aftershow at this festival in Denton. We'd played with Destruction Unit earlier in the night at a sports bar. Our friend got dragged out of there in a full nelson and we stopped playing three songs into our set. They sent security in a V-formation to rip the guys off of him. It was really intense. The show kind of got ruined. Destruction Unit's set was kind of a bummer because everyone left because everyone was stressed out about the situation, so we played an aftershow at the taqueria and that was super great. But that was the first show that I ever played there and Sven who owned the taqueria was standing on the counter. People were throwing fireworks and shit was just exploding everywhere and he was just laughing and loving it the whole time.

A lot of younger people were booking there who were really enthusiastic, understandably. And it got to a point where it was a place that maybe should have had one or two shows a month but they ended up having four or five a week. And a ton of people were going because it was so cool and so fun! They stopped serving food early, at like 4pm. So at night they would have shows, and they would make tacos for the shows too. But with three or four shows a week there was no way the cops weren't gonna get called in on it. Then the landlords found out about it and told them they had to stop. And then people unfortunately stopped going to the taqueria after there weren't shows anymore so it shut down. It was a bummer.
Harpal: The restaurant shut down?
Payton: Yeah, because they were not doing so well kinda, and then the shows started and everyone was going there all the time and eating tacos. And then everybody forgot about it after there weren't shows anymore.

MRR: Alright, so what about future plans?
Payton: We're trying to figure out a tour for some time in the first half of next year.
Adam: Kinda working around our other band's constraints. Institute has to record an album, and then Video just did, so they're gonna do Europe.
Payton: And Greg plays in Radioactivity as well. So he's super busy.
Adam: Yeah, he's like a hired gun. He's in Nobunny and Parquet Courts, who are doing an Australian tour. He's all over the place.
Harpal: I think we're trying to go West, just 'cause we haven't.
Adam: Kids are always hitting us up, but there are so many gaps in between shows when you do a West Coast tour, whereas on the East Coast…

MRR: You can't fit everything in.
Adam: We've done it before in other bands, though.
Payton: I wanna do it. I wanna go swimming on the beach. Get sunburned.
Harpal: Hopefully we'll get a LP out.
Payton: I would say we should have a LP out by the first half of next year.
Adam: We have a demo tape that's four of the new songs for it. We just recorded it on a Tascam four-track.

MRR: The best way to record.
Adam: Yeah. I'm just learning how to do it. I never thought I'd be able to.
Payton: It's the best way 'cause there're only four things you can adjust.

MRR: It's fucking badass.
Harpal: It turned out pretty well.

MRR: Any last words?
Payton: We didn't even talk any shit. We're getting too old. We're too nice.

MRR: It's true. You guys are really nice. I just wanna have that on the record. Wiccans is a really nice band. You should definitely book them in your town!

Payton: Only one of us might get drunk and break anything.

MRR: We won't reveal which one.
Adam: He's not here.

MRR: Well, that narrows it down a little.
Adam: We could talk about bands we like.
Payton: Yeah, what bands do you like?
Harpal: Wait, current, or…?

MRR: Let's stick with current.
Payton: Do I like any current bands? I don't pay attention to current bands.
Adam: Austin's always good.
Payton: Austin's always great, but I love Ooze and Big Zit. I just got into them.

MRR: Both from North West Indiana, right?
Harpal: Yeah, Coneheads is another band from there.
Payton: That's my favorite stuff I've head recently.
Adam: I think we've always connected to that scene, which is kind of surprising to most people. Older people too, since there was never much there. It's always been hit or miss there. People who are a few years older, we'd tell them "you gotta go to the Midwest for hardcore," and they were like "What?!"

MRR: It's kind of the capital of the knuckle-dragging…
Payton: Yeah just weird… kids who seriously are what people think punks are. You know kids with just leather jackets and five piercings who are all just safety pins. Huffing duster...
Adam: And we don't really fit in with them, but we do.

MRR: But if you don't look punk, maybe that scene will be more likely to accept you.
Payton: Because they're the punkest, you don't wanna go up against them in terms of looking punk.

MRR: Those are kids who wear leather jackets 'cause they fucking have to wear leather jackets.
Payton: [laughter] Yeah. Man, some kids in the Midwest huff so much duster it's unbelievable.
Adam: And spend all night playing knife games where you just throw knives at your feet.
Payton: It's like *Repo Man*, in Kansas City especially.

MRR: And these are scenes that get overlooked.
Payton: Totally. And they have great bands too. Like Nuke Cult. And St. Louis is really great. Every time we played St. Louis it's been amazing, since the first time.

MRR: And that's not a hyped scene at all.
Payton: No, except Lumpy and the Dumpers are big.
Adam: Which is funny 'cause I knew the singer because he booked one of my old bands when he was like fifteen in Arizona. And it was at this guy's house, this drug dealer's house or something, who'd left the house. These kids came in and were like "Okay, we're gonna have the show really fast." And they were going crazy, just throwing pillows and everyone was sixteen so we were like, "This is so weird." And we were like "Can we stay here?" and they were like "No! The guy gets back! You guys gotta be out!" So we hung out in a parking garage and drank sodas with these kids skateboarding. And then years later Wiccans played in St. Louis with the singer who lived there and I was like, "Did you book my old band when you were like fifteen in Arizona?" and he was like, "Yeah!" And he had this really tough straightedge band but he was wearing just a diaper.
Payton: St. Louis is truly an insane place. Shaved Women!
Adam: Shaved Women are great. The record store there, which is not there anymore 'cause it's closing down. Apop.
Payton: That's the only place we've played. We played there three times.
Adam: And City Museum, which all the punks work at. They have a giant slide there and Greg and I were like, "Can we go down the slide together?" And there was a guy there reading the paper who was telling people they couldn't do that, until we asked him and he looked up and said, "Oh, Wiccans! I was at your show! Yeah, come down! Do whatever you want!"
Payton: What other current bands are good?
Harpal: I was just thinking outside of hardcore. 'Cause we all listen to other stuff.
Payton: Yeah, I don't really listen to hardcore very much.
Harpal: There's a lot of good synth stuff in Austin. Like Survive. And it's interesting cause Sleeper Hold has played a lot of punk shows. I know Timmy Hefner has booked them on stuff. They played with Iron Lung and Una Bèstia Incontrolable.

MRR: I love Una Bèstia Incontrolable.
Payton: Yeah they came and that was one of the first times I saw a band, especially a hardcore band, that was just like, "holy shit." It's one of those things where it's really cool to see a hardcore band that clearly isn't just pulling from hardcore. They clearly listen to the whole breadth of rock'n'roll and probably things outside of that and incorporate all of it. And we talk a lot about trying not to be too much of a hardcore band, but I think it's important to us too that we take all of these influences and funnel them all in.
Adam: And crowd reaction. That's one of the things that drew me into hardcore especially. Playing shows where you can tell if people are into you, in a way. Because you get an immediate response most of the time.
Payton: A total visceral response. Like being a magician. You're casting a spell on people and they start hitting each other.
Harpal: It's fun to watch.
Payton: It's cool too because I don't like to stand up front anymore because I don't like to get hit in the head. So the one way that I actually get to see everything happen is when I'm playing a set.
Adam: You just don't get that with other shows as much.
Payton: Even with Video or something. Totally punk, but people don't go nuts for that.
Adam: It's good to have that fun and bring in all these other influences.

MRR: I mean, people went pretty nuts last night for your set. You guys are a little dancey. You can dance to Wiccans.
Payton: Yeah, it was fun. I felt good about it. Last night was interesting. I feel like a lot of people up front for one reason or another weren't feeling it when kids were going too crazy. A lot of people were getting stopped mid-mosh. I mean, I understand, I get it. But it was kind of a funny thing. It kept almost starting and then people were not having it [laughs]. But we had a great time anyway. The day show we played yesterday was pretty wild. Lots of stage dives and hardness. That was at Nocturne. We just jumped on. A lot of bands didn't make it into Canada and had to cancel, so they just asked us. I got questioned at customs because another band I'm in, Glow God, didn't get through a few times. So I'm flagged forever. They're gonna question me every time. It's a huge bummer. They just ask me about that situation and I gotta be like, "I got bad paperwork, I'm sorry. I didn't know what was going on." They've let me back in since. I don't know why they still hassle me.
Adam: Luckily I committed all my crimes before the age of 18 so I'm expunged.

MRR: That's a good message for the kids reading this. Do your crimes young.
Adam: Yeah, do it before you're of age so you can come to Canada and see a huge punk fest. Or maybe not get in to the shows, but at least stand outside of them.
Payton: I've only been arrested once. Peed on my own car and they took me in.

MRR: I got a ticket for the same thing! [high five]
Payton: Yep. This was in Denton, TX. I think it was $200 and then I got a failure to appear. And then eventually I got taken to jail. My friend was supposed to be standing watch for me while I was peeing and I see a car pull up next to me and think, "Oh, someone's parking next to me." But then I hear a woop woop and my friend goes, "Oh hey, dude, there's a cop."
Harpal: How long were you in jail?
Payton: Too long. Like eighteen hours overnight. So I didn't have to pay shit, which was pretty cool. But I had a show the next day. And I was supposed to be at work at noon. But I got out of jail at like 12:30. So I just went to work and said, "I'm sorry, I got arrested. But I'm here now."

MRR: Any last words?
Payton: Don't do drugs unless you want to! If you haven't ever eaten bánh mì do it, that's what I'm about to do. I think that's a good statement for us as a band.

Hear Wiccans at soundcloud.com/wiccans or get in touch at wiccanspunk@gmail.com.

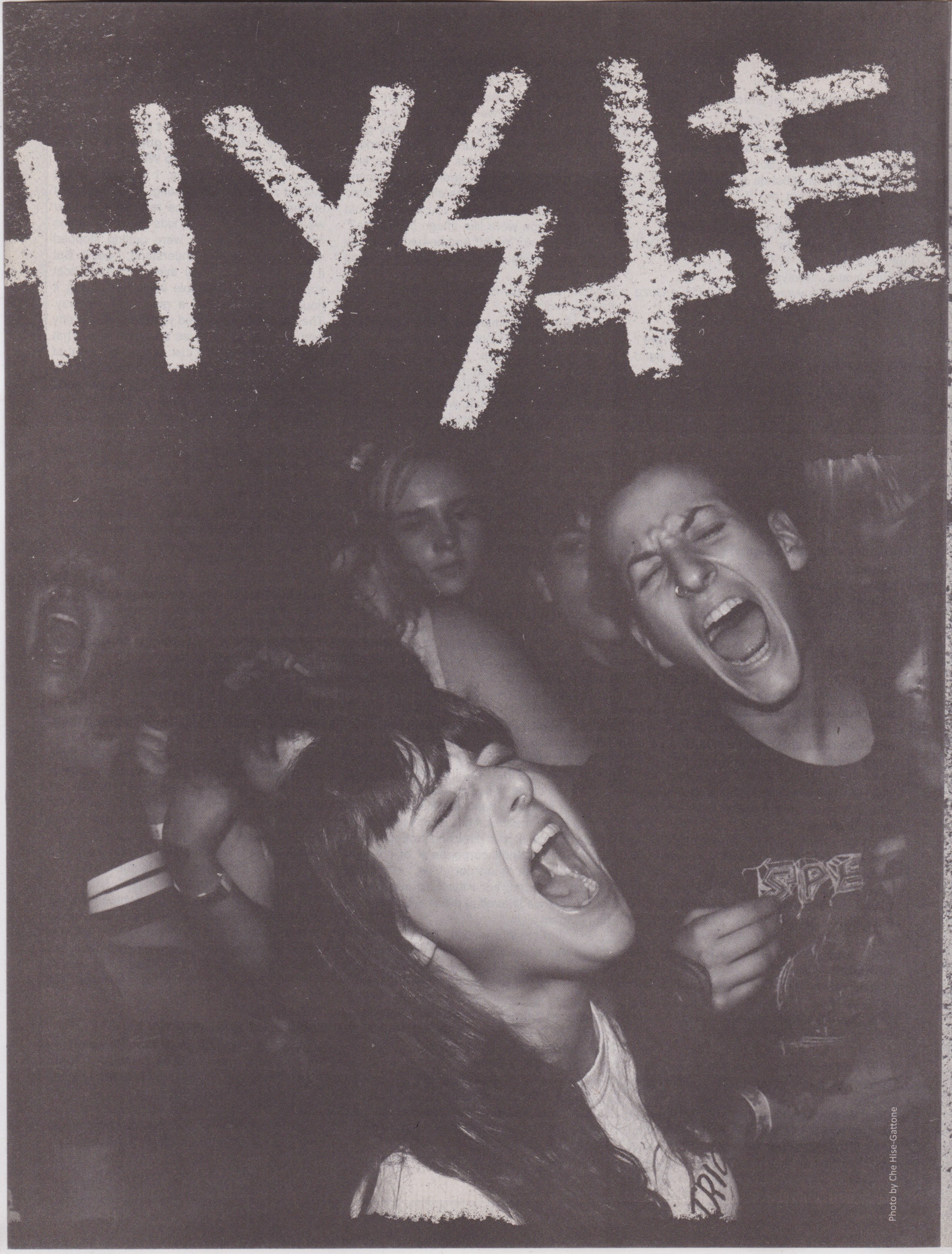


Photo by Che Hise-Gattone

RICS

Adriana: Guitar

Jessica: Bass

Matt: Drums

Stephie: Vocals

Hysterics was a hardcore band and they were damn cool.

They were cool because they knew that hardcore is not for the cool and this is what made them important and, well, being important is kinda cool.

I fell for them forever when I saw footage of them playing in an east coast basement. As the groovy bass paved the way, the offbeat drums blended together with the feedback-filled guitar noise in a chaotic intro, and Stephie, their singer, burst into an awkward rage, wildly running in zig zag, losing control over her body while her enthusiasm took over her limbs, making such non-threatening, yet still absolutely violent moves, summing up her inner rage in a simple act of articulating that, for them, this is fun. I often come back to this video to remind myself what is the personal greatness in this community, sub- and counterculture. It's about going against the grain and feeling alright even when nothing really allows you to. Because to live is to be lost and confused and when you know you are lost and confused then you begin to start finding yourself. This is punk; to be abandoned and to cope with this dumbness, to transform it into whatever you want with whatever you have. This is the point of living and gosh, Hysterics could live!

Now they are gone, but their existence reminds us how easy it is to remake hardcore again into a platform for the misfits, where all the young folks can save their lives from boredom and bullshit.

With a demo and two 7"s as a discography Hysterics was also band you had to see live. Their records' basic sound carried the visceral message: We have no idea how to play but we are sure as hell what to play. They played for their own sake. There was will, they were ready to die on stage, they made us want every band to be as enthusiastic for punk as they were. They gave everything they had and they got back everything they wanted. Let it be a joy of performing your angst, putting out your music, traveling through your noise or having the chance to simply say: "Well, fuck you."

This conversation took place on their European tour in May. The band played its last shows on October 10th and 11th in Olympia and Seattle, Washington. Introduction and interview by Viktor Vargyai. Photos provided by Che Hise-Gattone, Ben Trogdon, Fabiola Reyna, Kelly Chambers, Elizabeth Grillo, Osa Atoe, and Spencer McFarland.

MRR: What were the first bands you were into? Were there any shitty bands? Because when I started listening to punk I listened to a lot of ska punk...

Stephie: Wait, are you saying ska is shitty? [Laughs]

Adriana: I was into a lot of shitty ska when I was growing up. I think Operation Ivy was the gateway and then I just went from there, getting more into bands with lyrics that I liked and related to that were angry and political, I guess? That's what started me getting into punk, as opposed to ska.

Jessica: I listened to nu metal, because I lived in the middle of the country and that was what was available to me. Then I downloaded Kazaa and started randomly downloading things like Agnostic Front when I was fourteen and that changed the whole game. My only regret of my early hardcore choices was that my first Cro-Mags record was *Alpha and Omega*! And of course I loved it!

Adriana: ...them simultaneously going like, "What?! One of these bands is just straight metal!" I was really confused. It was a kind of similar experience sampling the different niches of hardcore and punk in a live setting; I was just like, "Whoa! What is this? What is this crazy mosh metal?" And then I was like, "This stuff is more punk and I like this..." I'm also older than a lot of people in the band so metalcore was really popular, which was a really interesting experience.

MRR: You know, when I ask people that question, they always say that when they first got into punk it was funny to them because the music is kinda weird—it's so fast and simple, and everybody's singing "fuck the government!" But eventually it grows on you and you're like "Yeah, alright, I agree with that." How was that process for you? How did you end up with the definition of punk you have right now?

Stephie: I didn't really understand a lot of the political side at first. I connected with the unrest, the restlessness, and the sense of feeling like something was vaguely messed up? But I didn't, for example, at fourteen, really understand what capitalism was or anarchism was or anything. It challenged me to wanna learn more about that stuff because I identified with the fundamental restlessness and feeling apart, being apart from what was around me. It planted the idea in my head to ask a lot of questions and challenge what the norm was, which sort of led me down a path of being able to form my own politics, my sense of myself in the world.

Jessica: I was just young and really angry and didn't know why. I listened to a lot of punk and heavier music because I identified with the way it sounded. Growing up can be somewhat difficult in a small town—it takes a really long time to work out what your politics are and feel things—and I probably didn't understand what I wanted out of life until I was eighteen and moved away to the coast and started interacting with people who weren't from Oklahoma. I think my anger really just kept me going. I had a lot of things to be angry about and punk helped me raise my voice about [them] and figure out where I was and where I stood in the world before I could form my own thoughts about these things.

Stephie: It definitely triggered a lot of thinking, both on the level of society at large, and also about myself and whatever semblance of community I had. You could make critiques of a wider system, but the same process of questioning and defying the norm could translate to ideas like DIY or putting out your own record or booking your own show or starting your own band. Kind of what got the wheels turning on a lot of different possibilities.

Matt: The turning point for me was like, firstly listening to this music; at some point there

We fought to be taken seriously with subversive humor and aggression and brains, and we broke through. It really grew in its own way.

MRR: What made you dig into this and leave nu metal?

Jessica: Punk's more accessible and has politics that I agree with, and nu metal doesn't really have that at all. I grew up very ignorant, with a lot of ignorant people around me, and when I was seventeen I started being more introspective, listening to bands that talked about things I felt the same about. It was a transition out.

Stephie: I got into Nirvana when I was twelve or thirteen. I had pretty much just listened to Top 40 and rap before that. I had always felt like a freak at school and had hated being a freak, so getting into guitar music made me suddenly feel good for being a freak, gave me a reason to be like that.

Matt: I was listening to NOFX via my brother and then I was in an after-school program for those who needed help studying. My tutor was like, "Oh, you listen to NOFX?" and gave me a Minor Threat CD. And then it was over.

Stephie: Yeah, somebody in my seventh grade class burned me that CD.

Matt: And then from that, I just got more into things that were happening around my town in Philadelphia, went to a Global Threat show and became a street punk.

Stephie: It took me a while to realize there were still bands playing that kind of music...punk and hardcore in general. I just assumed it was over because all the bands I was listening to were old. So the idea that there was a local scene happening a couple years after I had started listening to this music just never occurred to me, that it would still exist. So that was cool!

Adriana: I grew up in Chicago so I knew there were punk shows but there was such a range of things going on that it was overwhelming. I remember getting a Minor Threat CD and a Sick Of It All CD and *A Fistful of Hardcore: An East Coast Compilation* with stuff like Fury of Five on it? [Laughs] I was just listening to

Adriana: Once I started listening to bands that had lyrics that were more serious, critiquing society and the government and whatnot, that's when I actually felt more attached to the music and that's when I wanted to listen to punk. Before that, I didn't really understand what it was about but it was those lyrics that attracted me to it in the first place. Over time, that made me start going to shows, and that funneled me into where I am now, however many years later.

Photos by Ben Trogdon

it's still disconnected from your reality. But then you go to shows and the people are playing the music and you're like "that's the same," but then between songs they talk about what's happening in the world, and maybe it's a band from your area and it relates it back on some personal level where they're talking to you about something in their life and it's real and affecting and not just through music. It's actual experience, and there's these things going on and it's making me think about it more than just the musical form. Going to shows and interacting with people and bands on a larger scale, starting conversations on a more personal level really changed what punk meant to me.

Adriana: That's a really good point—that it's disconnected at a certain point, or it was for me when I got into it. Through a process of going to shows and showing up and interacting with people, getting involved in different projects, it became more of a visceral experience. You are so provoked sometimes when you go to a show and someone talks about something that's very real, and you peel back a layer keeping you from reality because, you know, you're an angry kid trying to figure out what's really going on in the world. I liked the music because I thought, "Wow, this is real and these people are real and talking about real things, and it's affecting me." It's not just like being in school and all the kids around me are just zoned out and fake, watching TV and drinking.

MRR: Can you remember if there was a specific point when you felt when you wanted to start this band? Or the first time you formed a band and felt "I can do this better"? Or did you go to a show and it got you so inspired that you started something? Or was it natural because in punk everybody has a band?

Stephie: For Hysterics, seeing Adriana sing in Outlook was a big turning point for me because it was the first time I had seen a female-identified person sing in a hardcore band and just command all the respect in the room. I just assumed that people wouldn't take me seriously if I sang in a band because of gender stuff, and so being able to see that was possible was definitely a moment that ignited some thought in wanting to do something like that.

Jessica: Being in Olympia too, it's really easy and super cheap to live, so people just form bands. So many bands!

Stephie: Everybody and their mom is in a band.

Jessica: Everybody.

Stephie: For better, for worse!

Jessica: It's funny, I kinda lived there for three and a half months and joined a band, and I had never been in a band before. It was the right environment to be able to do that in many ways.

MRR: Were you playing music before, or did you start playing bass for this band?

Jessica: I played music in middle school but had never played in a band before. I'd never even really thought about it honestly, because, I don't know, a lot to do with not really seeing females in bands? So it was cool to move to Olympia where there're lots of non-males in bands. It feels like it can be more of a reality.

Adriana: I just remember at a certain point when I'd been going to and booking shows for a while and there came a time where there was a shortage of people in Olympia and someone needed someone to play something and I was like, "I'm not very good, but at the same time this is punk and I might as well just do it." That attitude is what made me be in bands. I might not be the best person at XYZ, because there's always a lot of self-worth stuff, right, that keeps you from doing whatever you wanna do. So at a certain point I just said "fuck it."

Stephie: Also, the kind of simplicity of the style of music made it more acceptable maybe than the idea of playing more complicated styles? Similar to what Adriana said, if a band needed a position filled you started thinking, "Well, I don't really do this but maybe I could learn how to do this?" There was a band I was in when I was sixteen that needed a drummer and I had played a little bit of drums but I listened to a Minor Threat CD-R in my headphones and played along to it as long and fast as possible until I got tired, and I did that every day until I could play the whole record. And then it would be like, "cool, I can be in a band!" There's just this accessibility about it in how simple it is. "It can't be that hard!" There are bands with this kind of music who are literally children, like, fucking Teen Idles or Stimulators. They were literally children on stage playing punk!

Matt: For me it was similar but completely different. I started my first band when I was fourteen or fifteen. Someone had given me a drum set and everyone was like "Oh, you're gonna play drums, then?" I think about how fucked up that is because it really is simple and accessible, but a lot of that has to do with gender dynamics and feeling empowered as a fourteen-year-old male to do whatever you want to do. It just feels really unfair. In a lot of ways I was thankful that I felt that way but at the same time I feel, "Wow, that really sucks that not everyone feels that way" when talking to different people who say how they didn't feel empowered to start bands until they moved to a place that's been set up to make people feel included, and not just Anywhere, USA.

Jessica: It's funny because while the question was being asked I was thinking about growing up in Oklahoma and realizing that if I still lived there I would not be into punk. I would be doing something completely different. That environment of going to hardcore shows just wasn't available to me; I forced my way in there but never felt like I belonged, and it's funny that none of the people in that shitty scene are into hardcore anymore, but I'm still doing it!

MRR: What were the steps in forming this band? Were you friends before?

Stephie: I remember talking to Adriana about it and there was someone else who was gonna sing, and I was going to play bass and we didn't know who was going to be the drummer for a while. When it became clear that that arrangement wasn't going to work out, I started entertaining the idea of singing, and we knew Jess and thought she was cool.

MRR: Who had the original idea of getting the band together?

Adriana: It was actually someone who isn't in the band anymore, but I remember her talking to me about how it'd be sick to have an all-girl hardcore band and I was like, "Yes, I really wanna do that." Stephie and I had seen each other around but didn't really talk to each other...

Stephie: I was new in town; it was 2008. I had just moved.

Adriana: I approached her about it, we talked about it for a long time. Stephie and I became friends, then Jess moved to town and became friends with us and so there was a sort of back-and-forth until we actually got together and started writing a song. And then, everything changed, Stephie started to do vocals, and it was awesome.

MRR: When you practiced, did you start by jamming or playing covers?

Adriana: We were jamming, but Stephie and I had gotten together and workshopped a few riffs prior, even like a year before starting the band.

Stephie: Yeah, it was a while.

Adriana: It was a kinda chaotic meeting of four people.

Stephie: Definitely. Everyone was, for want of a better term, fucking their way through it. We were all new to the instruments we were playing.

Adriana: I had never played guitar.
Stephie: It was really chaotic but it was cool, we were having a good time and I was just enthralled with what at the time seemed like a radical idea because even though there's totally been hardcore bands that were only comprised of women or trans* or queers, at the beginning I felt like we were the only one! I wasn't aware of a lot of that history in hardcore because it has been erased or is more inaccessible than it should be. Now it feels less so, and obviously since we've been touring I've seen all kinds of bands that make me realize how much great stuff is happening.

But at the time I was like, "I've never heard of another hardcore punk band without guys in it, this is crazy, let's do this crazy banner with tampons on it and see how many people we can piss off!" There was a lot of excitement at the beginning and the more we kept playing the more serious and the more real it all felt. It went beyond the kitsch and whatever novelty factors people might have perceived in the beginning. We fought to be taken seriously with subversive humor and aggression and brains, and we broke through. It really grew in its own way.
Adriana: The novelty factor is interesting. I remember not wanting to do the tampons at first because it was just four people playing hardcore who happen to be women and trans* people or whatever, right? It was interesting adopting that logo because it was like well, people are going to talk shit regardless or people are going to notice that we're not all dudes playing hardcore, so why not just rub it in their face? You could perceive it as kind of a joke. It's facetious almost—four tampons arranged in a Black Flag logo.

MRR: People were freaking out over it?
Adriana: Yeah. I just thought it was funny but then it seemed to chafe against people's ideas and proved how there is so much resistance in this patriarchal hardcore scene with guys coming up and saying, "That logo is akin to me having a shirt logo of toilet paper with poop on it!"

MRR: And yet everyone's making a fucking legend of GG Allin shitting himself! Maybe it's just...body fluids in a polite way?
Stephie: *Body Fluids In A Polite Way*, that's going to be our next album.
Adriana: It's weird how you can put something that's gendered on a shirt and it seems more shocking as opposed to shock imagery, like a dead person, which is actually more upsetting and people think that's fine. You put a tampon on a shirt or something to do with menstruation which half the population at least deals with once a month and people freak out.

MRR: It's not even offensive, it's just what nature does.
Stephie: Yeah. I never really felt feminine in the conventional sense but I liked the idea of defining femininity for myself and embodying that and presenting it in a really aggressive way because that's what I like about punk and hardcore, that it's aggressive. I wanna use that aggression and wanna use the way I feel about gender and shove it in people's faces a little bit, because it's like, why is a guy allowed to be confrontational with all the trappings of conventional masculinity, but I'm not allowed to have some fun and be aggressive with my gender?
Adriana: Like you said before, why would we be serious by default? Why can't we have fun with things as well, know what I mean? We can be a serious band and get angry and sing about serious things and not take ourselves totally seriously.
Stephie: Basically, like self-definition. It's very easy to fall into an idea of what, under this gaze, of what somebody wants you to be to please them, in a certain way. Just trying to subvert that, I guess.

MRR: The punk scene always seems to be preaching about one thing and acting in a different way, making a huge thing about stuff that should be normal.
Stephie: Well, punks have been splitting hairs over dumb shit since the beginning. It's kind of appalling sometimes when you do meet a misinformed person who likes to run their mouth, but there are also a lot of people who are cool. It's not that hard for me to just forget about whatever idiot is saying something stupid because I know there are people who are down. We've got a lot of support. I definitely found that playing music with people who identified as women or as trans* people or whatever, it was like a really new feeling, like you've created an environment that just felt like it changed the feeling in the room. That was empowering to me, to be able to have that experience. I've played in bands that were all men before and it was really fun but this was a different kind of feeling. A freer feeling. In a certain way, I identify as a female sort of out of convenience but the societal shit that's stacked against people who aren't men gets so intense that I want to defend it even more vehemently. It's like a back and forth between how I feel and what society is showing me, and that tension. It's kind of crazy.

MRR: Do you think your music would be different if it were four guys?
Stephie: I think we would maybe have different stuff to say.

MRR: How about musically, is there a femininity?
Stephie: Fundamentally, to like the way we play a chord? I don't know! [Everyone laughs]
Jessica: That's just bringing back that idea that punk music is male, that because the music is aggressive it has to be male-identified. Music is just music unless you want to pull it in that one direction. We like hardcore, we play hardcore, it has nothing to do with what's going on in our bodies, you know? I don't think it focuses or changes the music at all. Whether people want to like us because we have females in the band, that's their prerogative if that's what they're into but we can't really speak for why people like us.
Stephie: I think some people relate to the feminism and the lyrics that are maybe different and are drawn into it for that reason. I think that's totally valid, also.
Jessica: But the chords alone, no. "There's so much testosterone in these chords!" [Laughs]
Matt: As someone who hasn't always been in the band and has been able to see it from an outside perspective, as well as interacting with the gender thing on a different level obviously, for me seeing Hysterics was really cool and empowering, and not in a "good for those women!" way, but good for me because it's breaking this idea that masculinity belongs to males or that there's this idea of masculinity in the first place.
Stephie: Or aggression?
Matt: Yeah. Or just like this idea of socialization that men are like this and women are like this, punk is like this and if you're a guy you have to act like this. To see women take something that has been claimed and dominated by men and take that means that I don't have to do that any more either, because it's breaking the binary two ways, you know? It's really cool.

MRR: The first time I fell in love with your band was when I was watching this video of you playing some basement in Boston, and the way you moved and the faces you made felt so free, like you didn't give a fuck, and you're doing it however you wanted to do it, and it seemed like you were losing your shit because you were enjoying the music that much. When you're on stage, what goes on in your mind, do you have insecurities onstage or offstage connected to this band?
Stephie: I guess I just figure go hard or go home. Put everything you have into that show or just don't do it. I just think that people can sort of smell a fake a mile away, and it's always impossible for me to half-ass a show. It's why I always lose my voice

Photos by Fabiola Reyna, Kelly Chambers, Elizabeth Grillo, Osa Atoe; opposite photo by Che Hise-Gattone

right away. People will tell me how to sing with moderation and breathing properly, but the second I start I just forget because I have to just be like, *going*. It's impenetrable in a way: what can someone say to you if you put everything you had into something? Like, "oh, it sucked"? Well, fuck you! Know what I mean? Nobody can say it's bullshit, really. That's why I'm not insecure. I grew up on early '80s hardcore and stuff and a lot of the expressiveness got lost as hardcore progressed over the years, which meant that so many bands between the mid '80s and now were just so predictable. I really appreciate bands who were expressive in a way that wasn't just sticking to a code of how you were supposed to act or move or whatever. It keeps things interesting.

MRR: The rest of you, how do you feel on stage?
Adriana: I guess I'm just trying to play guitar, and sometimes I get nervous. When I was singing for a band it was actually easier; you were just going all in, and it's just you, but when you're playing an instrument you're just trying not to fuck up what you're doing. It feels like I'm doing something instead of being out there performing, you know what I mean? If I think too much about how people are watching me play my instrument that makes me kind of freeze up, so I just try not to think about it: just do my job, get it done!
Jessica: I've always had short hair my whole life and since I've grown my hair out long it's really cool to cover my face when we play. I feel a lot better. [Laughs] Insecurities are weird, we all have different ones and I don't know whether you being on stage or just interacting with someone is that different an environment. I'm just happy I hide behind an instrument and have something to focus on.

MRR: Speaking of the freedom of punk: did you really play a trumpet solo in the middle of a Cro-Mags song?
[Everyone laughs]
Adriana: Instagrammed, worldwide!
Stephie: Solo is a kind term. I found a fucked up trumpet, and I played it. It sounded exactly how I wanted it to, which was disastrously out of tune. Jessica: It was also accidentally on April Fool's Day.

MRR: What's your attitude towards playing punk music?
Stephie: In general? Just try to be free. Make a space that's free and don't follow the codes too much. Don't feel you have to.
Jessica: Freak what you feel.
Stephie: There was a long period of time where punk or hardcore wasn't for the freaks anymore. In the beginning it really was for those who felt marginalized or those who just wanted to do whatever they wanted, and somewhere along the line it morphed into this uniformed, heavily coded, boring, prescribed way of being and it wasn't for the freaks anymore. And that just isn't really interesting to me. I like the idea of putting a damaged trumpet solo in the middle of a Cro-Mags song and they're such a masculine, tough guy band. That I love, but with a grain of salt. I like surprising people. Who wants to see the same thing over and over again?
Adriana: I think especially in punk when you start, from when you're fourteen, you're always asking yourself if you're looking right, talking right, knowing all the right bands. If you're conforming to the non-conformity. And that persists for way longer than it should and there's a certain point when you're playing music and you just decide, "I don't even fucking care if I play this right, or what people say." It's fun to stop caring so much—if we're going to put a trumpet solo or a weird part in a song or play something wrong I don't even care. You have to loosen up, not take it so seriously.

MRR: Nowadays it seems normal that bands have lyrics that don't say anything—the vocals are an instrument as well, they could just be part of the music but don't matter that much. It seems like you wanna write lyrics that mean things to you, so is it harder? Do you have many topics to write about?
Stephie: I got topics. Damn, I got topics! [Laughs] The way this band has operated with fits and starts and long periods of activity and non-activity, I've realized that the lyrics have followed suit in a similar way. At one time I'll have a lot to say and get five songs written down at once, and then not write anything for months. To me that's probably one of the most fun things in the band, lyric writing. I really like the process of it. The idea of having a song that's a minute and a half long and trying to condense as much as possible to say in that amount of time in the way I want to say it is always enjoyable. Sometimes I feel like I've got nothing to write about, but inevitably there's always something that comes up and inspires me again.
Adriana: One thing I like about being in this band is Stephie's lyrics. I was reading the lyric sheet to our EP, *Can't I Live*, and I was like, "Man, this is getting me so pumped!" And then I thought, "Man, I get to play in this band and help to further these lyrics and put them out into the world" and I think that's really cool. Because for me, getting into punk, while it's not like all the bands I've ever listened to have had impeccable lyrics that are thought-provoking and well-written, my favorite bands and the music that I love and get inspired by, always have lyrics that are good and reach me. I've really appreciated Stephie's lyrics.

MRR: How did you feel when *Pitchfork* wrote about you, did you get anything out of that?
Stephie: We didn't get shit. The *Pitchfork* thing is deceptive because people would assume you're like a big band because that happens but we're not really. People don't offer us money to do things, really.
Adriana: I'm going broke as it is!
Stephie: And just because the major indie world might be interested in some bands that play punk or hardcore because it's trendy right now doesn't really affect us that much, we're still doing our thing. If they wanna write something about it, then whatever, but we're not a band to please those people. They can do whatever they want, we don't change what we do because of them.
Adriana: They're not offering us a tour bus, we're not playing Coachella. It is something I can tell my

I guess I just figure go hard or go home. Put everything you have into that show or just don't do it.

relatives though, and they can get impressed!
Stephie: And what you do is valid for a minute.
Adriana: "Oh! Well then!"
Jessica: My boss told me about the *Pitchfork* thing, printed it and put it on the wall.
Stephie: It's weird how being recognized by certain sources causes certain people outside punk and people to suddenly decide that what you do is semi-valid for a few minutes. "I get it, a corporate publication kind of cares about you, maybe you are doing something with your life!" How backwards is that? It's just so strange. I'm doing the same thing whether you recognize it or not and how valuable, does it actually matter? Just the fact that realistically a lot of those publications are just dabbling in the punk and hardcore world, it's not that they'll change the ethics of what they're doing because of this subculture, they just want to write about something trendy that will lend some credibility to their publication, to say they've got their ear to the ground. It's so funny how that manifests though. Take a band like Perfect Pussy, they're getting a lot of press right now, and they're friends of ours I think, and they seem like intelligent people. And yet, as soon as all the *Rolling Stone* shit ran, a bunch of white 50-year-old men were coming into my work asking for Perfect Pussy records! It was really bizarre and sort of like, what happens when you join those two worlds together, what are people really looking for?

Adriana: There's that gross feeling isn't there? Ugh!
All: Ugh! Yeuch!

MRR: Is this tour gonna affect you in a way? Does playing your songs for a month every day, inspire you to write more songs or agendas?
Stephie: I don't know about the agenda thing, but it's definitely been inspiring to see what people are doing in other places. I've personally been blown away by the squat stuff going on in Europe, it's so different from the States. You'll have these squats that have been going for decades.
Matt: There're some that have been sponsored by governments, like in Germany.
Jessica: Yeah, the place we played in Offenburg is sponsored by the government.
Matt: There're different kinds of squats. In Barcelona we played a place that is gonna get evicted in the next two months and then in Zarautz there was another illegal squat that maybe is going to be evicted in the next couple of years. There're ones like the one we played in Zagreb which started out as illegal squats and then became community centers in a way that was legal. None of that shit exists in the US in the same way and it's really inspiring to see that happen, claiming space, keeping it for long periods of time.

MRR: Is it harder to be a punk in America, without that infrastructure?
Stephie: We definitely don't get money from the government for the arts, which seems to happen in a couple of places here. People go broke trying to facilitate shows in America.
Matt: Yeah, and physical space is hard in the US. Squat shows don't really exist and finding venues is often difficult in many cities.

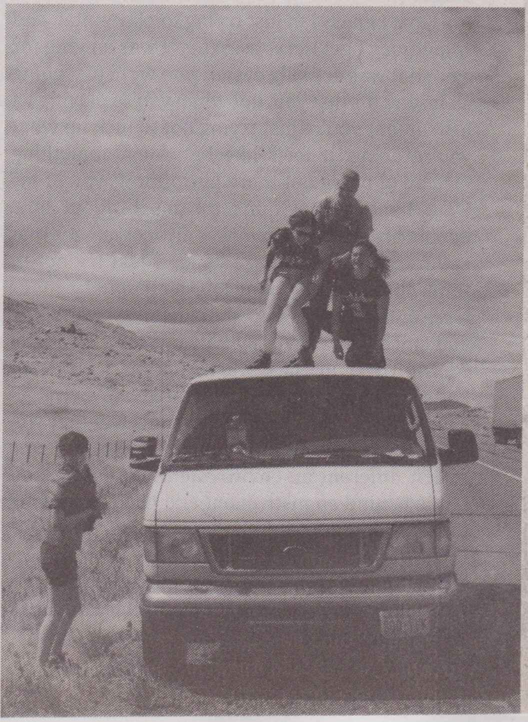
MRR: But it's harder to play a house show in Europe, because of the neighbors and, like in Hungary everybody buys a flat and aren't renting it, so they're not thinking "we're here for a month and I don't give a fuck about my neighbors!"
Stephie: A lot of times the house shows happen out of necessity, and yeah the neighbors do get mad, the police do get called and people do get evicted! That's why it's so hard to keep it going. There's this constant threat of eviction, rent hikes, crazy building codes that cost thousands of dollars to legally meet...you just never know at a given day when it's going to be gone. When people put shows in houses it's often because there's nothing more you can do. You don't have a bunch of money to rent out a proper venue, what happens if not enough people come? What happens if the touring band, you can't pay them anything? A lot of people just end up paying out of pocket and there's a fleeting feeling to a lot of the venues out there, a feeling you have to cling to what you have because it might be gone tomorrow.
Adriana: I know that there are different places that have opened up around the US, like youth-orientated music venues which sometimes get grants and maybe some government funding or private money to operate and run their projects that help to support young people in the arts. We've played those places a couple of times but they're not really centers of hardcore or punk, it seems. I guess it's harder to make it happen, but it still seems like the same factors exist over in Europe: the whole space thing and funding is just different.

MRR: There're some people in Europe who are like "Oh, these American bands have it so easy!", but it turns out that if you're a squatter in Germany and have a dog you get extra money from the government to feed your dog. I just met a guy in Denmark who's doing community service for throwing a brick into a cop's face, and Marty was telling us that if that happened in Chicago...
Stephie: You'd be in fucking jail.
Adriana: Or dead.
Jessica: I mean, there are different worlds, we all deal with different struggles being in punk and doing punk things in the area that you're in but they're all valid and real. And like, whether your squat gets assistance from the government or not, you're still doing what you want to do in the space you created for it, and that's cool in itself.

MRR: Do you have thoughts about why most of us listen to American bands? Like, even the European bands are singing in English, but that's changing now because of the internet, which might be because you can download shitloads of punk and not have the time to pore over the lyrics like before.
Stephie: It's instantly accessible now. It's funny, I still don't listen to music that way, I don't listen through the internet. I might check it out and then buy the record if I like it, but maybe I'm old fashioned or something.
Jessica: I don't even have a working computer or a record player, so the internet's been good for that, pulling up Bandcamp on my stupid smartphone and listening to the same band about twenty times in a month. That's how I get into music. The internet has made it accessible and easier for me but I understand how the turnover can be super high, everything comes and goes so fast. The thing about American bands being so popular I'm sure is because of the media and how everything American is everywhere.

...we all deal with different struggles being in punk and doing punk things in the area that you're in but they're all valid and real.

Stephie: Americans don't do a very good job of paying attention to things outside of America a lot of the time. There's a lot of reasons for that, some of it coming from a certain political and imperialistic attitude that assumes that America can provide for itself with everything it ever needs and that leaks into a lot of people's lifestyles, where it's just this sense of an enclosed space. Kinda sucks.
Jessica: That was the most exciting thing about coming over here. I had never left the United States before, all I knew about Europe was what my parents experienced from being in the Air Force, you know, and what kind of traveling is that? It was really cool to be excited about



something you had no idea what to expect and seeing bands that were singing in their own language. Like when we saw Las Otras in Barcelona—I had no idea what she was saying between the songs, but it was cool to be there.
Matt: You couldn't understand it but you could feel it.
Jessica: Definitely! You could stand there and feel it and even not speaking the same language with someone but trying to communicate with them in a different way is really cool.
Matt: It also feels like for American bands, it's kind of easier to come to Europe than it is for European bands to come to America. There's this support network in Europe that exists and it's relatively easy to get all your shows booked, get the right equipment, get a van, get a driver, and everywhere you go people are cooking you dinner and you're getting paid and people are coming to your show. The promoters are putting in a lot of work, cleaning the place, putting a lot of work in the venue. In the US, those things don't exist. Who's got a van that anyone can borrow? Nobody, you know? It's just hard.
Stephie: Like, if you had a van would you let them borrow it?
Matt: And who's got a backline to rent? I don't know! Who's got their own shit? I don't even know.
Jessica: And the strangeness of us going to all these completely different countries that speak their own language and how many speak English, how if it was reversed it'd be completely different and that's wild to me, like how many people can speak to me in English.
Matt: Some crazy hegemony.
All: Yeah.
Stephie: A lot of it is luck, having the right band at the right time, having the right support to be able to have a tour that's semi-successful. I know people who work a lot harder than I do who have never had the opportunity to do a European tour like we've had, so I feel super fortunate.

MRR: Have you ever had hard moments where you felt you should just quit all this?
Jessica: Yeah, but I think there were personal reasons rather than outside factors.
Adriana: In one year I did two full US tours and it nearly broke my spirit. It is pretty exhausting and you have to love what you do and care about your band to do that. And you need resources. I was lucky—well, not lucky, I got in a car accident—and got a settlement from that so I was able to not work that much that year, and scrape by on going on tour, but you do have to care about what you're doing, otherwise there's no point. I know bands who are kind of successful and who go on tour all the time, they're always touring, it just seems like they have the resources and the drive and the passion somewhere in there. I'm not in a hurry to do a full US tour to be honest!
Jessica: There are quite a few bands who have toured the US who aren't from there that have just broken up.
Adriana: People break up in Europe too. Or on any long tour.
Jessica: It's just different, like exactly what I said before: similar yet different struggles on different continents.
Stephie: Sometimes it is nice to only have one meal at a gas station a day as opposed to three. Like on a US tour where it's chips for breakfast, chips for lunch, soda for dinner!
Jessica: Showing up somewhere and seeing someone has made you food as opposed to telling you the gas station's around the corner or there's this vegan restaurant down the street that costs a lot of money.
Adriana: "Oh, but it's closed!"
Stephie: "Maybe tomorrow."
Jessica: And so that's completely different.
Adriana: The fact you cooked two meals for us was really good.
Stephie: Amazing.
Jessica: Mindblowing.
Matt: I wouldn't do that for you at home. [Laughs]
Stephie: I think it's also hard in America because everyone works too much, and there's not a whole lot of energy to go around to put into music. There're so many bands and everywhere we go we meet people who are super kind and willing to put us up for the night or whatever, but there's also this kind of pressure in America because people are just spread really thin for a number of reasons, and being in a band or the arts is this luxury they can't really afford.
Jessica: I was fucking miserable. I don't have a job anymore but I fucking hated working at my job, I was working late all the time, couldn't even find the energy to go to shows. I was perpetually broke. It wears you down.
Matt: But Viktor works 40 hours a week and has two hour commutes every day and puts on shows, puts up bands. There are a lot of people in the US that are overworked, but people here are too and they're still doing a lot of cool shit.
Adriana: It depends on how stoked you are too. There was a time where I was working 60 hours a week and still playing in bands and going to shows.
Jessica: It can happen, it does happen everywhere. And there are waves of it too, like what Adriana said about touring so much, you have to love it and it's cool. I could talk all day about how I hate my job but I quit it to be here...
Stephie: "I quit my job for this!"
Jessica: Yeah, I quit my job for this. And that's great in itself, being willing to sacrifice shit to make things happen and experience things and it's fucking cool. Being here, sitting here in Budapest with Viktor. I quit my job for this and I couldn't be happier. When I get really dark, just bring that up!

MRR: Do you worry about getting drained out playing hardcore?
Adriana: The thing with hardcore bands is they don't have that long of a life expectancy, and it kind of takes it out of you and is sometimes a pain in the butt to do things yourself. It's not gonna last forever, we are going to get sick of it and then we'll break up.
Jessica: It's the cycle, you know?
Adriana: But it's also like, we've been here a long time, as a band we could keep going...
Jessica: We could go for thirty years.
Adriana: Just wait for the reunion.
Stephie: I think there was a time where I felt really restricted by hardcore and punk, but I don't feel...
Matt: You've got a trumpet!
Stephie: I've got a trumpet.
Jessica: And now your mind has changed!

Stephie: Now I feel we can do whatever we want, and right now it's still hardcore punk but our blues album is coming out soon...
Adriana: Oh my god!
Stephie: It just feels right to play right now. I mean, I have outlets to do other bands and other stuff too, but I come back to hardcore because it's hardcore and punk and not because it's something else. I like it for what it is.
Adriana: I take back the negative vibe of what I said first but what I was getting at was what Stephie said, you do it for however long you do it, and then you just don't anymore. It's not worth planning out, and if you get bored there's always other outlets for you musically.
Stephie: There is something inherently short-term about hardcore and punk because it's so much energy condensed, it's no wonder bands burn out or get weird in a shitty way.
Jessica: The flame burns brighter for shorter.
Stephie: Just the natural order of things.
Matt: Like, how many records can Hoax put out?
Stephie: I heard they broke up kinda for that reason. They'd done all they could do.
Jessica: Before we left I was in a pretty dark place and was thinking, what is there you can do after Europe? There's nothing to be done after Europe, but now I'm here it's like what Stephie said, you can do whatever you want, you know?
Stephie: I wanna do a record!
Jessica: That's the beauty of punk, you don't know what's going to happen, and that's fucking cool.

Contact the band at hystericsoly@gmail.com.

Far left and right photos by Che Hise-Gattone; near left photo by Spencer McFarland

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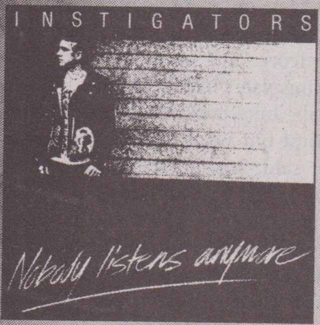

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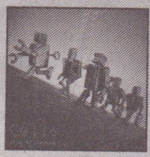

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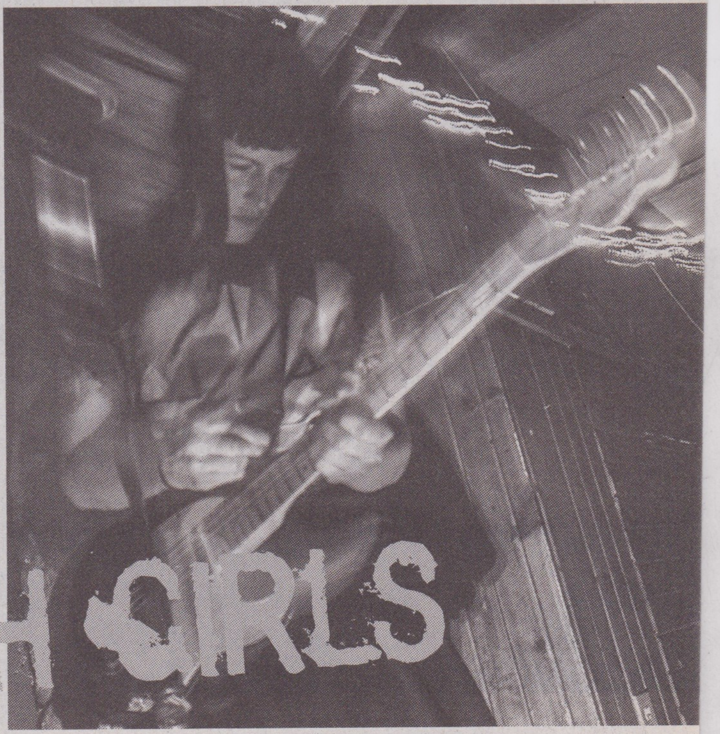
SPLIT INTERVIEW
CO-CONSPIRATORS FROM CHICAGO

EARTH GIRLS AND BROKEN PRAYER

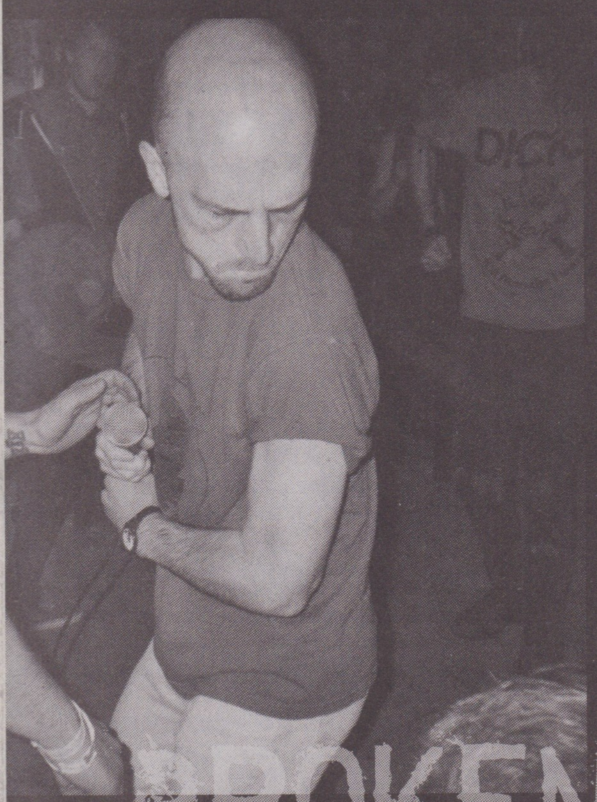
Earth Girls are from Chicago, and they are easy—to interview, that is! I was in a van with them, driving from Saint Louis back home to Chicago in the wee hours of the morning when we recorded this. I interviewed band members Joey Kappel (puppet) and Liz Panella (puppet master). Nic Allred and Antonio Holguin are also in the band. Introduction and interview by Scott Plant. Photos by Bombs Away Photography, Brian Santostefano, and Priten Vora.



MRR: WHO DO YOU THINK IS BETTER?
Liz: Between the two of us? I'm older, so I'm better.
Joey: Yeah, Liz is older so she's gonna die sooner, so I'm gonna live longer and that makes me better.
Liz: Joey does do sit-ups everywhere we go, so that means he's probably way healthier.
Joey: Liz has more caffeine, but I feel like I have more sugar.
Liz: Let's add it to the list of differences. *[Ed. note: Liz likes Dr Pepper, Joey hates it. Joey loves rollercoasters, Liz doesn't. Liz loves cats, Joey is a soulless cretin.]*

MRR: TRUE OR FALSE: WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?
Liz: Well, for the band, we're hoping to quit our jobs, sleep in a hotel every night, maybe record some songs. But that's an afterthought.
Joey: Play as much as we can in as many places as we can.
Liz: And write some more songs.

EARTH GIRLS



A Day in the Life of Scott Plant: Broken Prayer's witty and dashing founder. Being in Broken Prayer involves the complete abandon of one's free will. I conducted this interview so that the world could understand my position. Besides me, Liz Panella, bandleader Scott Plant also bosses around his little brother Mark and our previously unsuspecting friends Joey Kappel and Nick Donahue. Interview conducted by Liz Panella, Brie Goldstein, Cody Phifer, Zach London, Mark Masters, Antonio Holguin, Nic Allred, and probably a lot of other people I'm forgetting. Photos courtesy of the band.

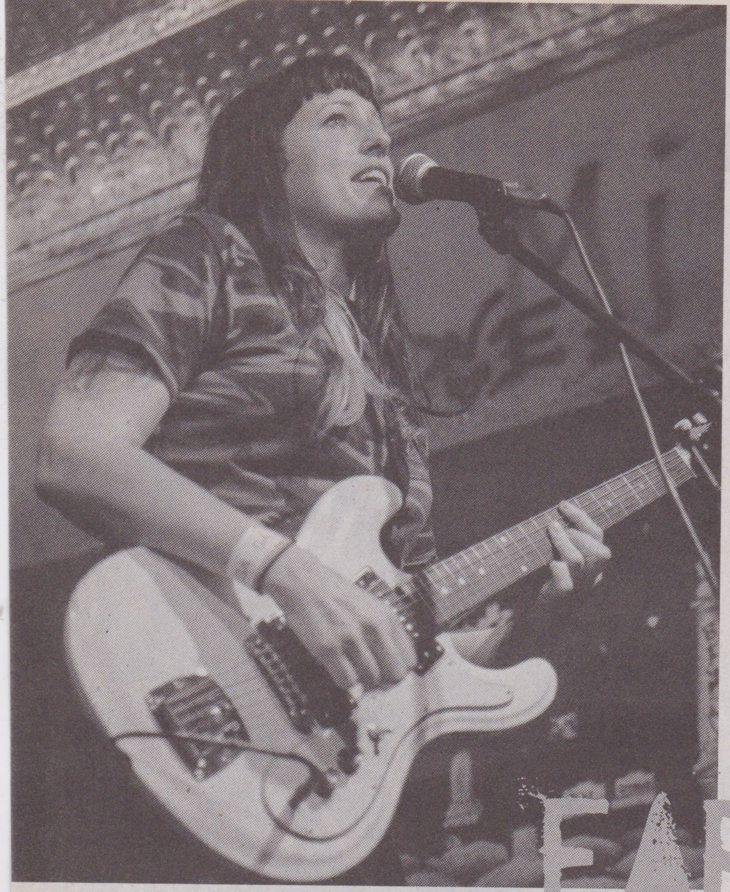
MRR: CAN YOU TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHO THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK IS?
Scott Plant: The man behind the mask is...wait, are you talking about the Broken Prayer song or the other man behind the mask song that I found on YouTube and is arguably better?

MRR: THE BROKEN PRAYER SONG.
Scott: "The Man Behind the Mask" is, I suppose, the national security state. I'm a pretty deep fellow with a lot of interesting interests. I talked to some people who, I later realized, were FBI agents at an Occupy Wall Street thing one time. That got me thinking that, you know, maybe this security state is not a really good thing. And I'm gonna do something about it! So I wrote a punk song.

MRR: SO IT DOESN'T REPRESENT ANY PART OF YOU THAT YOU LIKE TO KEEP HIDDEN?
Scott: I'm dark and mysterious.

MRR: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BROKEN PRAYER SONG AND WHY?
Scott: Gee, they're all so good. Actually, it's probably "The Man Behind the Mask." Just because I got to do two synthesizer parts. *[Ed. note: It was actually three.]*

BROKEN PRAYER



MRR: ANYTHING ELSE YOU'RE WORKING ON?
Liz: After this 7" [coming out soon on Dirt Cult] we'll record a LP we plan to tour on. We just played Not Dead Yet in Toronto.

MRR: WE'RE GONNA DO A SERIES OF "YES" OR "NO" QUESTIONS. YES OR NO: FLOORPUNCH?
Joey: Yes.
Liz: No.

MRR: KRAFTWERK?
Liz: I thought they were American, so I don't know if I can answer this question.
Joey: Yeah, I...not applicable?

MRR: CHICAGO MAYOR RAHM EMMANUEL?
Joey: No. Can't even joke about that.
Liz: Yeah. Not a topic of conversation.

MRR: SPANGING OOGLES WITH DOGS?
Joey: No.
Liz: Very strongly no, considering the very recent situation where our very dear friend [Nic Allred] got into a fight with some oogles and was mauled by their dog because he wouldn't give them his french fries. Nic's a member of Earth Girls, so it's totally relevant.
Joey: He's kind of a member. He's a hired gun.

MRR: TACO BELL?
Liz: God's gift to food.
Joey: It's okay once a month.
Liz: Add it to the list of differences.

MRR: SOLID YES OR NO?
Liz: Yes.
Joey: I'm gonna say...
Liz: Yes. Yes.

EARTH GIRLS

MRR: IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, HOW MANY SYNTHESIZER PARTS WOULD THERE BE IN EACH SONG?
Scott: A hundred.

MRR: A HUNDRED PARTS WITH A DIFFERENT PERSON PLAYING EACH ONE?
Scott: No, it would be all me.

MRR: OKAY. [LONG PAUSE] SO, IF YOU HAD YOUR WAY, YOU'D BE THE ONLY PERSON IN THE BAND AND YOU WOULD JUST DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF. IF YOU *HAD* TO WORK WITH SOMEONE ELSE, WHO WOULD YOU HAVE AS A GUEST SYNTHESIZER PLAYER?
Scott: Brian Eno, but I don't really know if I want to have anybody. Like, if he asked, I'd think about it.

MRR: WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE IN A BAND WITH YOUR BROTHER? DO YOU GET TO BEAT HIM UP ALL THE TIME?
Scott: Verbally. I think I'm a lot harder on Mark than everyone else. First of all, because I know how to play guitar better than any other instrument so I have a better idea of what I want.

MRR: I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA SAY YOU COULD PLAY GUITAR BETTER THAN HIM.
Scott: I was going to but that seemed like it wouldn't be very nice. But both of those things are true. Yeah, we're brothers. He's four years younger than me. He has a twin. We live together in Fort Plant.

MRR: HOW COME ALEC ISN'T IN THE BAND?
Scott: Alec has his own band called Muscles Plant. We all have our own solo projects.

MRR: YOU SHOULDN'T LET HIM DO HIS OWN THING. YOU SHOULD MAKE HIM BE IN BROKEN PRAYER. YOU'RE THE PATRIARCH OF THE FAMILY.
Scott: [contemptuous silence] Okay. [more silence] So anyway, Alec and I visited my dad, whose side of the family is super right wing, but I shot a bull's-eye from a hundred yards away so they're happy with me now.

MRR: SO WHEN THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK COMES FOR YOU, YOU'LL BE READY. WAS THIS WITH A GUN OR BOW AND ARROW?
Scott: A bow and arrow is for morons. What I learned from visiting my family is that most people who bow hunt don't know how to track anything. They shoot an animal and then they can't find it when they go looking for it. *[Ed. note: Scott does not endorse shooting animals. 'cept the pigs, mate! Oi! Oi! Oi! Oi!]*

MRR: WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT TOUR PLANS?
Scott: We'll have to wait until summer because two of our members have active Devil Sticks careers. I'd like to be touring a lot.

MRR: DO YOU LIKE TOURING MORE THAN PLAYING LOCALLY? WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF BOTH?
Scott: If I'm touring that means I'm not working and probably sitting in a van getting lots of stuff to eat.

MRR: AND PROBABLY DEBATING SOME INTENSE ISSUE FOR SEVERAL HOURS.
Scott: Yep, probably having some deep discussion with the other Broken Prayer warriors.

MRR: THE OTHER FOUR SYNTH PLAYERS.
Scott: As for playing locally, when we first started, Nick and I didn't actually care if we played shows. Usually when somebody asks me I'll say sure, if we can, but in the abstract I think playing locally is a waste of time. It's just not an exciting idea to me. Really, playing shows at all, in the abstract, isn't an exciting idea to me.

MRR: YOU JUST WANNA BE SITTING IN A VAN AND EATING FOOD. DO YOU ENJOY THE ACTUAL PERFORMANCE?
Scott: It depends.

The van stops to pick up several more people.

BROKEN PRAYER

Joey: Maybe. Maybe to no. I only eat Taco Bell when there's nothing else available.
Liz: Joey, the world is black and white so you have to pick one or the other.
Joey: I'm gonna say no. If you guys are forcing my hand, I'm gonna say no.

MRR: THANK YOU. CRASS?
Both: Yes.

MRR: MINOR THREAT?
Both: Yes

MRR: SEGREGATION?
Liz: Are we talking about segregation between punks and oogles, or...?

MRR: SO I'LL JUST PUT "YES" FOR LIZ.
Liz: No. No segregation.
Joey: We do live in one of the most segregated cities, but no.

MRR: LET'S GET TO THE JUICY STUFF NOW. JOEY, THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF TALK ABOUT WHETHER YOUR SEX TAPE IS REAL OR FAKE. SO FAR YOU'VE BEEN COY. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL THE READERS OF *MRR*?
Joey: That's my personal business.
Liz: I heard it's real.
Joey: I'd appreciate it if you stayed out of my personal affairs.

MRR: OK, WE'LL MOVE ON. WHAT ABOUT THE SECOND TAPE THAT IS INDISPUTABLY REAL, WHERE YOU SAY, "I'M JOEY KAPPEL AND THIS IS ME MAKING SEX TAPE NUMBER TWO"?
Joey: I am unaware of such a video.

MRR: AND WILL THE FULL AUDIO EVER BE RELEASED?
Liz: It's the B-Side to the 7" that we're recording right now.

MRR: GETTING AWAY FROM POLITICS, WHAT'S YOUR SONGWRITING PROCESS?
Liz: Well, I walk around and ride my bike around and hum to myself like a crazy person all the time, until I get something I like and then I record it. Then I go home and play it on guitar and obsessively arrange it for like a month. Then I show it to Joey and he tells me it's bad. I have to start over, walk around, more singing, more like a crazy person, maybe record it in GarageBand, and then show it to Joey. He'll say it's bad, but we'll use it anyway.

MRR: WHAT DO YOU RECORD? DO YOU RECORD VOCAL PARTS?
Liz: Well, if I'm walking around I'll just hum it into my phone. Then I'll go home, play guitar, figure out what chords go with it, and record it with the real melody and fake drums.

MRR: WITH A REAL GUITAR?
Liz: With the guitar simulator.

MRR: JELLO BIAFRA DID THAT INTO A TAPE RECORDER. THAT'S HOW A LOT OF DEAD KENNEDYS SONGS WERE MADE.
Liz: My dad kind of looks like Jello Biafra. Maybe we're related.

MRR: CAN YOU ELABORATE?
Liz: He's got curly-ish brown hair, medium height, and medium build. Crazy political views, loves Art Bell, listens to conspiracy theory radio all the time, lives in an apartment filled with newspapers and violins. Hates communists.

MRR: WHAT'S YOUR MOM LIKE?
Liz: She was a communist. That marriage didn't last very long.

MRR: NOW BOTH OF YOU, EXCEPT JOEY, HAVE BROAD TASTE IN MUSIC. CAN YOU RATTLE OFF SOME INFLUENCES SO I CAN TYPE THEM IN BOLD FOR THE MAGAZINE EQUIVALENT OF CLICK-BAIT?
Liz: Well in terms of songwriting, Lou Barlow and Elvis Costello have been two of my biggest influences. Plus stuff I grew up on—grunge, the Beatles, the Stones, the Kinks, etc. I'm sure there's more. Bob Pollard, too. I'm really giving myself away as a child of the '90s.
Joey: You're forgetting Porcell and Walter Schreifels.
Liz: Walter stole my capo.
Joey: Walter played a record fair when Gorilla Biscuits were playing Chicago and he needed to borrow a capo for his solo set. I was helping out with it and we needed to find a capo ASAP! So we hit up Liz.
Liz: I have lots of capos.
Joey: We tried to get it back from Walter and he

MRR: SO, EVERYONE IS MAKING FUN OF ME FOR HAVING A STRAW IN MY HOT COFFEE, EVEN THOUGH IT ISN'T ACTUALLY A STRAW. SCOTT, DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL US?
Scott: On the Manipulation tour we were in Seattle, and the closest thing to the place we were staying was a bikini-coffee shack. The barista, bless her heart, didn't seem to be very knowledgeable about different coffees. Jordan, our singer, ordered an iced coffee, which she sort of bumbled around with. She gave him a Styrofoam cup with a straw in it. I ordered just a regular hot coffee and she didn't seem to know what she was doing for that either. We were all thinking to ourselves how could she not know how to serve a hot coffee? While we were thinking this, Jordan took a sip of his iced coffee that was very hot. He spit it all over the bikini-coffee shack. And it was hilarious!

MRR: HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE A YOUNGER BROTHER WHO ONLY EATS ROAST BEEF AND SALT?
Scott: Alec's my brother and whatever decisions he makes throughout his life I have to support.

MRR: THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAID THIRTY SECONDS AGO.
Scott: Yeah, but now I'm being recorded.

MRR: I THINK THAT YOUR LENIENT ATTITUDE IS WHY HE'S DEVELOPED THOSE EATING HABITS. YOU SHOULD AT LEAST GIVE HIM A SWIRLIE TO SHOW HIM WHO'S BOSS.

At a gas station in Hammond, IN.

MRR: OK, LET'S GET SERIOUS FOR A SECOND. COULD YOU TALK ABOUT WHY YOUR PREVIOUS BAND, CIVIC PROGRESS, ENDED AND WHAT SPARKED YOU TO TAKE SOME OF THOSE SONGS AND START A NEW BAND WITH THEM?
Scott: Civic Progress ended because Meister moved and Robert had his own stuff going on. And then I moved. I had recorded a demo of an entire LP, and then waited about five years, and came up with some other songs in the meantime.

misplaced it, but gave Liz twenty bucks.
Liz: Yep, more than it cost. I won.

MRR: CAN YOU RATTLE OFF SOME MORE BANDS? YOU CAN THROW IN SOME TV SHOWS OR MOVIES OR RIDES FROM SIX FLAGS.
Liz: Rides are Joey's—
Joey: I mean, Goliath is sick. I think it's kind of cheap because it's supposed to be the tallest, fastest wooden rollercoaster, but about half of it's made from steel or metal of some sort. It doesn't look as cool as other wooden rollercoasters, as far as the support beams go. My favorite roller coaster is actually the Voyage. In college—
Liz: He didn't ask what your favorite was. He just asked you to name some.
Joey: Let me finish!
Liz: Alright...
Joey: The Voyage at Holiday World in Santa Clause, IN—which is a real place—is amazing. It was previously the tallest, fastest wooden rollercoaster, but it's like a minute longer than the Goliath and just a little more fun.
Liz: How long is your average rollercoaster ride?
Joey: I don't know! You could have a minute long—
Liz: Are we talking three minutes?
Joey: Three minutes—
Liz: Ten minutes?
Joey: No rollercoasters are ten minutes. You would throw up or die. I'm sure it would not feel pleasant. But Six Flags Great America, the one outside Chicago, is pretty good. But Six Flags in New Jersey? That is the best.
Liz: Yeah, so...BBC's *Wild China*. I watched that recently. I watched all of that right in a row. Great programming. We should have a TV tax here.
Joey: We were just in St. Louis so I gotta bring up *Masters of Sex*. That's going on right now. The second season, I feel is a little weaker than the first, but it's alright. I'd like to say *Twin Peaks*—the TV show, the restaurant, and the band. Just leave that there. Anything else Liz?
Liz: Well, there's always *NSYNC.

MRR: RIGHT, YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT *NSYNC FAN FICTION.
Liz: Well, recently I've been thinking about getting back into creative writing. I haven't done it for a while. The last time I did it I was eighteen and my cousin, who was in her thirties at the time, coaxed me into following her around the country seeing *NSYNC. And even though I did it at first just to humor her, I eventually got really into it. I was a little brainwashed and wrote 27 chapters of an *NSYNC fan fiction novel. Unfortunately, that hard drive crashed and I no longer have it.

MRR: WHAT ARE SOME OTHER PROJECTS YOU'RE INVOLVED IN?
Joey: I'm in a band called Boilerman.
Liz: Musically, Joey and I are in Broken Prayer with you. I'm in Siamese Twins. We've played four shows ever. Very active.

MRR: NOBODY DOES ANY LABELS OR ANYTHING?
Liz: I half-heartedly do a label called Eunuch Records. So far I've only released records I've played on. Joey medium-heartedly does a label.
Joey: Yeah, I have a few things coming up, but I've had a few things coming up for a while, so I've just been waiting for those to happen. People take a long time to record.
Liz: Half-hearted and medium-hearted are the same thing.
Joey: I do Nervous Habit Records. We've done two or three releases and we have two or three releases in the works. Gonna do LPs for the Valenteens and Dark Thoughts. The Valenteens are from Chicago and Dark Thoughts are from Philadelphia. Dark Thoughts is one of my favorite bands at the bands at moment—and Nubiles, from Chicago.
Liz: Members of Broken Prayer.
Joey: Members of Broken Prayer, and Earth Girls' hired gun.
Liz: Oh, and I think I'm in Military Police with other members of Broken Prayer, at least live. Check it out on Lumpy Records. Or Lumpy Tapes. Or whatever it's called.

[Ed. note: at this point Mark, of Military Police, who was also in the van, had a question for Earth Girls: As a pop punk band, do you rip off Jawbreaker, or the Descendents?]
Liz: We've been accused of ripping off Dillinger Four. But I've never really listened to Dillinger Four.
Joey: Are you serious?!
L: Yeah.
Joey: Dillinger Four is awesome.

The thirty-five songs on the Broken Prayer demo are two songs from that LP and then two songs of me just goofing around, then thirty-one "Baskin-Robbins style" mash-ups, as I like to call it. I just decided I wanted to start a band again. I had been doing Manipulation, but mainly I just wanted to use the new synthesizer I got.

MRR: AND YOU WANTED TO BE IN COMPLETE CONTROL.
Scott: I need absolute power. It's the only way to achieve order.

MRR: I UNDERSTAND. CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE REACTION THE BAND HAS GOTTEN—PUTTING SYNTH OVER A HARDCORE SOUND. DOES IT SURPRISE PEOPLE?
Scott: Yeah actually, some people haven't liked it. There've been strangers who yelled at me while we were playing on stage, about how it's not correct in powerviolence, which makes no damn sense. Also, to fuck off and die. *[Ed. note: the incident here referred occurred when Broken Prayer opened for Iron Lung, and an audience member made a comment on the internet about how no powerviolence band should have keyboard. First off, if you keep reading you'll know that powerviolence isn't one of the band's songwriting templates. Second, and more importantly: the Locust. This second point is debatable as a valid piece of evidence.]* I dunno, if anybody else hasn't liked it other than the strangers while we're playing, they haven't said so. *[Ed. note: One certain Rob Ruz did question the need for it. It may be of interest to some readers that he is the inspiration for the band Rüz.]*

MRR: DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR MUSICAL INSPIRATIONS? YOU DON'T HAVE TO, BECAUSE I HATE THAT QUESTION.
Scott: As far as writing music? I think the best songwriting ever is Motown stuff

BROKEN PRAYER

EARTH GIRLS

Liz: I'm not saying I dislike them. I've just never really listened to them.
Joey: As far as I know, people make comparisons. People are like, "Oh, you're in a pop punk band? You sound like Jawbreaker, Dillinger Four, or the Descendents."
Liz: But see, with this band, we've gotten so many all-over-the-board comparisons. Some of them make more sense than others. Someone said Belly recently, and I guess I kinda hear it. Not with this band, but just about everything I've ever done gets compared to the Cranberries; which I don't totally understand, but who knows. Also, the Go-Go's.
Joey: I wish we sounded more like the Cranberries.
Liz: There have been a ton of weird ones. But I'm old and my memory is going.

MRR: WANT TO SHOUT OUT ANY OTHER CURRENT BANDS YOU LIKE? BEAR IN MIND, YOUR FRIENDS ARE GOING TO READ THIS AND IF YOU DON'T SAY THEIR NAMES THEY'LL BE HURT.
Joey: Wild Flowers of America, another Philly band. Dark Thoughts.
Liz: The northwest Indiana scene right now. Big Zit—
Joey: Big Zit and Ooze are the best bands in America.
Liz: All of Mark's bands—CCTV, Coneheads.

MRR: SO LIZ, YOU ARE A FEMALE, AND HAVE BEEN PRETTY SUCCESSFUL IN THIS SCENE. I WANT TO ASK, WHO IS THE LEADER OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT?
Liz: Obviously Carrie Brownstein.

from the '60s. Simple structure with good instrumentation. It's really catchy and fun. And then I also really like Nervous Gender and Discharge.

MRR: YEAH, DISCHARGE IS ONE OF THE INFLUENCES THAT I PULLED OUT OF BROKEN PRAYER, WHEN CREATING SCOTT'S LIST OF SONGWRITING TYPES.
Scott: Let's just go ahead and list your four categories.

MRR: OK, I'VE GOT DISCHARGE, DEVO, GRUNGE, AND KBD. NOT THAT KBD IS ACTUALLY A MUSICAL STYLE BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.
Scott: The only one that offends me is grunge.

MRR: WELL, I'M SORRY. SOMETIMES YOU CAN'T BE OBJECTIVE ABOUT YOUR OWN ART.

Back in the van, speaking with Zach London, the only person to have ever scabbed in the band. This is the point where the interview stops being about anything relevant, if it ever was in the first place.

MRR: ZACH, WHY ARE YOU SUPERIOR TO JOEY KAPPEL IN EVERY WAY?
Zach London: Well, I'm taller and handsomer for sure. I dunno, he's definitely better at drums than me.

MRR: BUT HE DOESN'T PLAY DRUMS IN BROKEN PRAYER SO THE QUESTION IS MOOT.
Zach: [exasperated] What do you want from me?
Scott: What would you say is the overarching philosophy?
Zach: Of Broken Prayer?
Scott: Yes, as you put it in place.

MRR: YES, AS DEFINED BY YOU ON THAT LOVELY SUMMER DAY IN 2012.
Zach: Ideally, with bass, it's about hitting the notes, not the chords. You know, just hold the rhythm down. It's difficult to do in that band.

MRR: YEAH, SCOTT, WHY DO YOU PUT SO MUCH RHYTHM IN THOSE SONGS? WHY DO YOU MAKE IT SO HARD FOR US?
Scott: Umm, I try not to. With Zach, he could handle it. But with all the other members, they can't. Zach was really a gem. It's gonna be hard to get back to that place.
Zach: It's why I've only done my solo bass project since then. I realized I don't think I can work with anyone else.
Scott: Readers, you should really check out his project. It's called Flipping Galaxies, it's just Zach and a delay pedal and a bass.
Zach: I don't turn the delay pedal on though. I like raw uncut bass.

MRR: WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO GET YOU BACK IN BROKEN PRAYER?
Zach: A reasonable amount of money.

MRR: WHAT ARE WE TALKING, $100 A GIG?
Zach: Whether or not we're gigging, if you guys will give me five lottery tickets a week I'm in.

MRR: I THINK THAT'S ACCEPTABLE. WE'LL HAVE TO TALK TO JOEY, AND LET HIM DOWN EASY, BUT SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
Scott: Cool. I'd like to up our gigging, and gig more regularly. You're in.

Sorry, Joey. Anyway, several hours later, we're at an abandoned munitions plant somewhere in northern Indiana, waiting to see Coneheads and Cal and the Calories. We're now observing Scott in a social setting, something that he'd usually rather avoid.

MRR: WHAT DO YOU GUYS HAVE IN COMMON? WHAT HAVE YOU BONDED OVER MUSICALLY?
Scott: That's a good question. We both like hardcore punk.
Antonio Holguin: Yeah! What are your feelings on Oasis?
Scott: I think they're fine. Really nothing to write home about.
Antonio: [incredulous] Oh, really??

EARTH GIRLS

MRR: WHO'S THAT?
Liz: The lady from Sleater-Kinney and *Portlandia*.
Joey: *Portlandia!* Speaking of females, we saw the Breeders last year and that was really good.
Liz: Yeah, maybe it's the Deal sisters.
Joey: I would say the Deal sisters, from my male perspective.
Liz: Or maybe Kim Gordon.

MRR: WOULD YOU SAY HILLARY CLINTON?
Liz: Oh, absolutely. I loved her husband's presidency.
Joey: 2016.
[Ed note: I don't know if they were being sarcastic or not.]
Liz: I actually had a crush on Bill Clinton when I was a kid. I would always tell my mom that he had a sweet face and she still brings it up. Joey, is that a similarity between us or a difference?
Joey: I mean, I guess I don't have a strong opinion one way or another. So I guess it's a difference.

MRR: WHY DO YOU WRITE MUSIC? JOEY, THIS ONE'S NOT FOR YOU.
Liz: I write music because it's a compulsion. And because I've been doing it since I can remember. And if I didn't do it I would probably lose my mind.

MRR: WHAT ARE SOME NOTABLE SONGS THAT STAND OUT IN YOUR CAREER?
Liz: Well, I know you want me to talk about the first song I ever wrote. I wrote it in the back seat of a car, driving on vacation to Vermont when I was seven. I wish that the readers could hear me sing it, but they'll have to make due with the lyrics. It's about me becoming an Academy Award-winning actress, which I really thought was gonna happen. It goes something like:

The cameras are rolling all around you
When you are a superstar
The world is begging for your autograph
Would you like it where you are?
A performing life is a great life
And you know it is true
A performing life is a great life
We've hit it big, and maybe you can, too

Joey: Wow.
Liz: Here's the thing, though: I was forced to take acting classes for like eight years of my life. So if I didn't think I was gonna become an actress, I would've, I don't know, done something...else.

MRR: LIZ, WHO ARE MOST OF YOUR SONGS ABOUT?
Liz: Uh, Bill Clinton. No, actually I don't really write about topics per se. I'll write a line of a song phonetically according to what the melody is and then I'll fill in the rest of the meaning based on whatever it sounded like in the first place. Which is kind of cool. I don't have to really think about anything.
Joey: No heart goes into it. No heart or passion.
Liz: Oh, the heart goes into it. It's straight from the subconscious, man. So much better that way. I tried to write Crass-style political lyrics and it was a total disaster, and I got ridiculed.

MRR: HAVE YOU ALWAYS LIVED IN CHICAGO?
Liz: We both grew up in and around Chicago. Actually, I should punch myself for saying that because most of my childhood was in Rockford, which is a completely distinct city and if people say we're from Chicago we get really mad. But I was born in Chicago.
Joey: I grew up in DuPage County.
Liz: Highest median income in the Chicago area.
Joey: Yeah, it's alright. It's like 45 minutes outside the city.
Liz: It smells like poo.
Joey: Yeah.
Liz: Here, not DuPage County. We're in Farmersville, IL, exit 72.

MRR: WHAT WERE THOSE LIKE?
Joey: Suburbs, strip malls...that whole thing. Close enough to the city of Chicago,

Scott: I prefer Stone Roses or...like, the Wedding Present is my favorite British pop-rock band of the '90s.
Antonio: OK, I'm a not as well versed in that type of music. I can't be like, "yeah man, I know that" because I don't. Have you ever heard of Stone Vengeance? They're like a thrash band from Oakland, they're great. Very theatrical. Just a bunch of dudes wearing Spandex.

He starts singing one of their songs in a very impressive falsetto. Check out Ooze for more of Antonio's sick vocal stylings.

Scott: I'm not really into metal but if it's funny like that I'll give it a shot.
Antonio: It's crazy because they were doing it so early, and to no attention. Nobody cared. They just got big again because skate videos started using their music.

MRR: SO, SPEAKING OF SKATING, SCOTT, YOU ENJOY SKATEBOARDING.
Scott: That's true, I do enjoy skateboarding. That's how I got into punk rock. Because I heard a Negative Approach song on a Consolidated skate video.
Antonio: I got into punk because I heard "Hybrid Moments" at the end of the ***Jackass*** movie and I decided I wanted to be in a band like that.
Scott: "Hybrid Moments?" What's that?

Liz and Antonio stare at him for several long, awkward moments.

where I could go hang out and go to shows.
Liz: And there were shows there, which is how he ended up seeing my band when he was in eighth grade.
Joey: Yeah, I started going to shows when I was fourteen and one of the first shows I saw was one of Liz's bands. She was already 40 or something by then.
Liz: What?
Joey: It was pre-Plan of Attack, who I'm sure everyone reading this interview knows about.
Liz: We did a split with Terror and the Promise.
Joey: Premier Youth Crew Metal. They were called Crash and Burn, which, if you're up on your Plan of Attack game, you'll know it's one of the songs off their first 7".
Liz: Care to sing it for us, Joey?
Joey: No. Did you sing those back ups? Was it crew vocals?
Liz: Yeah.

MRR: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST CREW VOCALS EITHER OF YOU HAVE EVER HEARD?
Liz: Chain of Strength.
Joey: I was actually thinking of Chain of Strength.
Liz: Put it on the list of things we agree on.
Joey: Chain of Strength is great. I was thinking of "Impact," those "Nothings!"
Liz: "Nothing!"
Joey: That's the first thing that came to my mind.
Liz: So, Earth Girls Chain of Strength cover record?
Joey: Dude, I would cover every Chain of Strength song in an instant. That's what I should do for Halloween. We should not waste our time practicing and teaching new members our songs. We should find someone who wants to do a Chain of Strength cover set.

MRR: DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU WERE AN IDEALIST? LIKE WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG?
Joey: Like when I was straightedge? Yeah.
Liz: Well, you're still vegan so you're still an idealist.
Joey: The answer is kinda.
Liz: I think I'm still idealist. It's kind of impossible for me to accept that everything is terrible. I just have this eternal optimism that even when everything's terrible I'm still like, "No it's fine. The world is good. People are good." And then I get fucking kicked in the ass and it sucks.
Joey: Yeah, I guess that's why we're still vegan.

MRR: WHY DO YOU THINK BEING VEGAN MAKES YOU AN IDEALIST? DO YOU THINK IT'S BECAUSE YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T AFFECT CHANGE THAT WAY, BUT YOU STILL TRY OR...?
Liz: I don't know if being vegan necessarily makes you an idealist. That can be practical as well. Like you could be vegan because—
Joey: But is that why you stopped eating meat?
Liz: I stopped eating meat because of the wastefulness of producing food. Because it takes X amount of food to feed a cow that will feed however many people and it's insanely wasteful.
Joey: I guess that's one of the reasons I stayed. I got exposed to issues of animal cruelty and stuff, but one of the reasons I stayed vegan was the environmental impact.
Liz: I still don't eat meat now because of that stuff. I'm not saying I don't care about factory farming, but that was never the thing that inspired me.
Joey: I still do things I feel guilty about.
Liz: Yeah, I try not to internalize things I can't control because there's no sense in feeling guilty when you're already trying and obviously it's impossible to live a zero carbon footprint life.

MRR: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WOULD CALL YOU PRETENTIOUS OR JUDGMENTAL FOR HOLDING THOSE VIEWS?
Liz: I would feel sorry for them.
Joey: I wouldn't. Fuck them.

You can contact the band via earthgirlschicago@gmail.com. Look for their upcoming 7" on Dirt Cult and an LP sometime in 2015.

BROKEN PRAYER

MRR: THE MISFITS?
Scott: Oh, I don't know the Misfits that well.

Wait, what? How is that possible? Anyway, moving on to the anti-climatic end of the interview...

Antonio: They're my favorite punk band ever. What's funny though, is that I fucking hate Elvis. So I'm not sure why it resonates with me, but I think he's got a great voice, even though he's a piece of shit rock jock now.

MRR: I LOVE ELVIS! I'VE BEEN TO GRACELAND LIKE EIGHT TIMES.
Scott: [ignoring her] Yeah, they're like the second most merchandised band after Kiss.

MRR: ANY FINAL QUESTIONS, ANTONIO? OR FINAL STATEMENTS, SCOTT?
Antonio: No.
Scott: No.

Well, there you have it. Contact us at docdart4mayor@safe-mail.net. Watch out for a new LP on Sorry State Records very soon.

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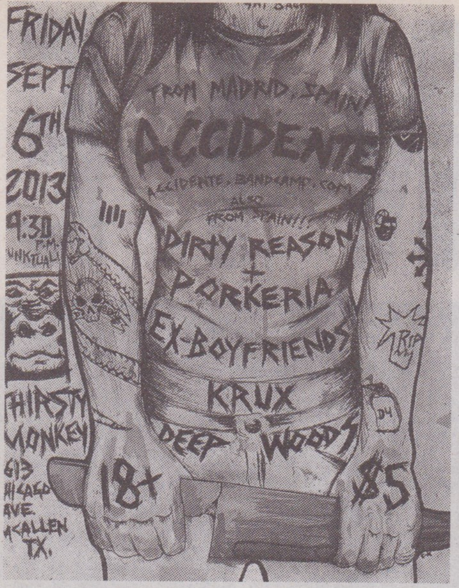
ACCIDENTE

Punks of the world, people of MRR *and all the other freaks reading this: Isn't it really worrisome that a band you like so much is mainly influenced by NOFX, Rancid, and Leftöver Crack? Doesn't it seem even crazier that Accidente is one of my favorite current groups in the whole wide world? Being a staunch defender of Firmeza 10, Crimen de Estado, and other local noisiness, how did I end up like this? How could I have betrayed "Hardcore Radikal" in such a way? Accidente really speak to me and penetrate my soul. Their lyrics, message, and attitude elicit a religious fervor in me, comparable only to my devotion to OTAN.*

Two reasons for Accidente's success come to mind. The first and more obvious reason is that they play a style that, even though I don't want to admit it, I really need to listen to. You know how it goes: Saying that you love the "Dis-", but at home you're listening to Elektroduendes on full blast.

The second is where they have totally floored me: they are totally sincere. They don't want to deceive anybody, nor do they do the political thing just to attract more fans—like some other bad seeds in Spain do. In Accidente, there are people who are super dedicated. People who get together to make songs out of love for their ideas and their way of understanding culture. For real, I have been with them, in their house eating their food, they've been in my house eating my food, god dammit, and I can say for sure that this whole thing they have going on as humble, committed, and "nice people" is true—there is no gimmick or falsity in their words. They are a bit of a nuisance, yes, but they are real. Interview and introduction by Frutos. Translation by Lena. Photos by Iago Alonso, Marcelo La Farina, and Guillem Willy Blocnroll.



MRR: In his column, Alex Ratcharge made a list of dos and don'ts for how to start an interview. Fuck you, Alex! How was Accidente born? What were you looking for when you started the band? Briefly explain your story.

Accidente began in September of 2010. That summer we had started getting together doing covers, and I suppose it was a mix of boredom, lack of other bands, and feeling like we wanted to start a new one.

The objective was pretty clear: we wanted to do punk and have fun. We knew each other pretty well and we didn't have to have eternal debates about how to orient the band. We knew since the beginning that we wanted to keep doing things ourselves, the way we want, deciding what to play, where, and for whom...

Our motivation was that our music could earn money for other causes that we consider "just." Also, we are stoked on music in itself; practicing is one of the best moments of the week, and playing fills us with very comforting energy and emotions. It's also given us the opportunity to meet a lot of incredible people who have taught us a lot.

Along the way we went to the United States and Mexico on tour with our brothers Dirty Reason, enjoyed a bunch of shows in the peninsula, and did a mini tour in northern Spain with our Norwegian sisters, Lucky Malice, on top of the European tour we did this summer. Not everything we do is political in nature, but we try to remain in the DIY circuit, and above all have fun and share experiences, and learn from it all.

MRR: I know you form part of various libertarian collectives and that you identify with anarchist ideas. However, Accidente's lyrics don't make this explicit. Why?

We are anarchists and some of us are active, but we don't believe in handing out pamphlets with the typical points as a way of accomplishing things, especially with people who aren't familiar with the language, and with a tone and message they don't understand. Of course they serve as an outlet for rage, which is also very necessary, and in the end a band is a band and the struggle isn't on the stage, but on the street, but this time we felt like transmitting our messages in a different way.

We are really into punk and counterculture, but we are also interested in communicating our message beyond the bubble, and we've noticed that sometimes language, aesthetics, and packaging create a wall between us and the others who hate this system but who don't share our codes. We believe that, in the end, everyone is asking the same questions as us, even if they're not anarchists, so why speak to them in a moralist, paternalist, or an avant-garde way? Why insult and miss the opportunity to question something or someone because of something superficial? We don't intend to cheapen our discourse but we believe that we all feel bad about working as a cog that doesn't have anything to do with dignity or mutual support, or we have personal stories or suffering inside a system that sucks, we can all feel empathy towards other humans or animals. Nobody likes to be dominated and we all seek out freedom.

In light of this, you can theorize or you can tell real, familiar stories, shared vital experiences that speak for themselves and are relatable, though perhaps in a more adult way, giving credit to whoever is listening. We don't want to become teachers who dictate moral truths, but rather, people who "feel things that compare," that can be shared. On the other hand, we believe that self-reference doesn't serve much more than for the self-esteem of those who practices it. Saying "Viva Anarchy" all the time is very nice—and for the record we say it when we get excited playing or when we see some hipster and we want to be annoying when on a given day people are outside of their political circle—but it doesn't help in convincing or learning, or in sharing anything.

MRR: You all are, or so it seems, firm defenders of alternative culture and music as a political weapon. What do you think are the limits of punk as a form of counterculture? How does one avoid assimilation or just simple leisure?

Punk, at the end of the day, is just music. Sometimes this is forgotten in the political bubble, or at least over here. There is much more importance given to controversial lyrics than to the constant work, the concrete daily struggle. The limit could be in thinking that punk is more than what it really is and believing that it's doing something more than that. On the other hand, we think it's great that countercultures exist—they serve as a fuse and also allow us to enjoy what we like, why not? It's a way of self-organizing and a part of our life to learn, debate, become familiar, and also enjoy in an autonomous way.

To avoid assimilation, we try to have clear ideas and not let ourselves be fooled by the things they try to sell us every day: what's easy, fast, and immediate. The attractive thing about punk is just that: it's treated as something that isn't for sale. It is maintained outside of the reality that we all hate and you have your own medium and content.

We don't view punk as just leisure, since it was born as an answer to a putrefaction that has not gone away. It is a type of rejection of the world that is still alive and kicking. We propose the activities we organize in a political context, give them critical and reflexive content, try to make it so our social centers aren't just filled up with concerts, parties, and superficial events, and figure out how to not lose our energy on fundraising activities which result in leisure activities and typically with alcohol, drugs, etc. We believe in giving importance to debate and political critique and in not limiting our "activity" to shows, fashion, and popularity.

The good thing about punk is that it is passionate about what it

expresses. When this passion is faked, it's a pose, and when you only say dumb stuff, then all that is left are decibels and chords, which don't really move us. It doesn't make sense to be yelling and expressing rage while you only talk about stupid stuff. Although, there aren't rules about what to sing in your songs—it's about trying to communicate feelings and conflicts you have in your head, which allow you to open a dialogue with others.

MRR: Lately, with Sota Terra we have booked shows for various bands that draw a lot of people in terms of our circuit, such as Accidente. How do you deal with the money aspect? Do you want to be paid for just your expenses or something closer to the actual amount of money you generate?
Just the expenses. Sometimes you have all given us a little more and lately we have had some more left over from selling shirts and records, and it's gone towards filling some holes, or towards releasing something or donating it to some cause or project that we support. It makes it so that we don't have to be in such bad shape. There are a ton of new projects around us, and people who are suffering reprisals who need the money, so if we make extra money at a show it is a triumph.

MRR: You play what's called melodic hardcore, something pretty unknown for me. What are your influences? Which bands have made an impression on you musically?
You say we play melodic hardcore, others say we're doing power pop, still others say it's pacifist punk. In the end, everyone puts their own label on it. Between all these options, we like that you say it's melodic hardcore, though maybe it's more like melodic punk rock? I don't know. To hell with labels!

We have a lot of influences and bands that have made an impression on us. We've all been addicted to this music since we were little. Some people say we sound like NOFX, but we don't agree, because, among other things, they know how to play and they practice. However, it's a band that we've known since we were kids, along with Rancid, the Clash, Choking Victim, Leftöver Crack, etc. In the end, it's inevitable that they rub off on us when we are writing songs.

As a band, Accidente also has a lot influences. We all really like Post Regiment, or the hardcore punk style of Ballast, all the bands from Bremen like Lost World and Day by Day. We really like current/former bands from Portland, like Observers, Red Dons, Autistic Youth, Adelit@s, Arctic Flowers; fast and melodic punk from France like La Fraction and Youth Avoiders; bands from Eastern and Northern Europe like Masshysteri or Assassinators. We really like melodic hardcore from California and everything else that contains some punk or hardcore with melody. We also listen to different styles and we're super into bands as different as Ekkaia, Suicidas, Kartón de Zumo, Amanda Woodward, Peligro Social, Minor Threat, Union 13...

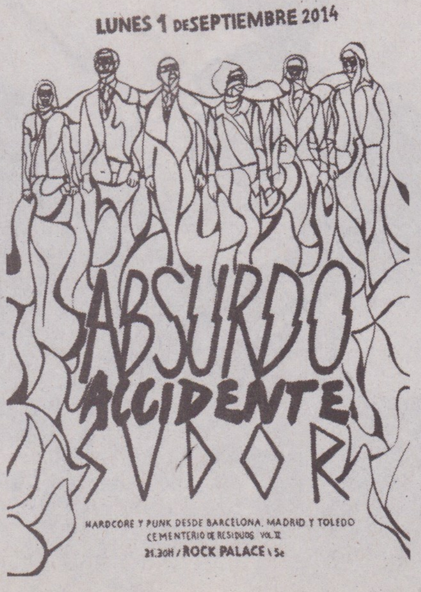
MRR: In general, what groups or projects have influenced you in terms of the way you conceive punk?
Before we started playing, Sin Dios was a big influence on us: anarchist pamphlet, hardcore punk, and honesty in equal parts. Once we started playing, we became more and more a part of the anarchist DIY scene in Madrid (and also other places), getting to know great bands, projects and friends like Kartón de Zumo, Producto Interior Bruto, Inugami, Cámara de Gas, Regocijo en el Fango, Folie A Trois, Asfixia, Estigia, and Necesidad de Luchar, but also DIY spaces like the anarchist space Magdalena, La Casika, K.A.B.O, Izar Beltz, el COKO, and many more. Surrounded by this network of projects and great people, we discovered another way of understanding punk, where humility and struggle come before aesthetics, provocation, and self-destruction. We are still inspired today by bands like Chimpancé, Decisión, Duelo, and Fraga. We are lucky to know them and their members, and with some of them we have lived through victories and failures in politics and in life in general, and we've learned a lot from their discourse and their attitudes.

MRR: Tell us how you distribute your music—the preparation, recording, etc., and why you do it this way.
We make the songs in our practice space when we are all able to get together. Someone brings an idea for a song and we all work on it together. We did both recordings in the Musigrama studios in Madrid, since Pablo (guitar) works there. Pablo prepares everything for the recording and Diego, the younger brother of the two guitarists, helps us out, so it all stays in the family. In one day we record all the music, and Blanca does the vocals later.

The process of distribution has changed a bit. In the beginning we decided to make 1000 CDs of our first record and give it out for free at our shows and to anti-commercial distributors so that people would heard about us. We ran out fairly quickly and there were distributors interested in paying for another 1000 copies in order to give it out for free, and we are forever thankful to them. There was a label in North Carolina (Cesspool Sounds) that released 525 copies on cassette and they gave us an entire box for free! Later on, some distributors and friends' labels offered to release the first record as a LP in Spain. 500 copies were made and we tried to keep the price as low as possible. This year there was a repress done by some old and new labels.

For *Amistad y Rebelión* we made another 1000 CDs to give out at our shows, sometimes with the option to pay what you want. There were 1900 copies pressed on vinyl and released through various labels in Spain, Germany, France, USA...

We try to make the prices economical and make it so that the



money the labels generate from our records goes towards other releases, for our band or any other band, so that in some way the money stays within the "anti-commercial punk circuit."

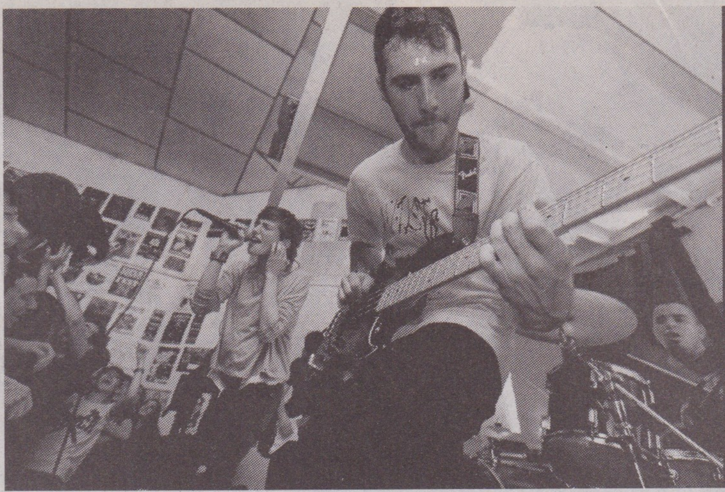
MRR: You make a lot of references to the CIEs and the institutional racism in the Spanish State. It's an important topic—can you explain a little more?

It is a really fucked up thing for us, a huge deal and sometimes more traditional anti-fascists forget about it. The CIEs (immigrant internment centers) are fucking jails, full of people—and the only thing they've done is come from another place. Their options are misery, death, war, violence, or being undocumented. This is really intense and we'd like it if people paid more attention to what's going on there and for the struggle against it to became radicalized, since it's typically NGOs and other unrelated projects that are talking about it. In recent years, the law has become tougher, raids in the metro are more and more common, and the average internment time has increased. We see a shameful official discourse that criminalizes migrants, and opportunism on behalf of the national-socialist sectors of the State that blames the migrants for the average citizen's situation. There is the danger that this State-sanctioned discrimination will spread to the general population. Inside the CIEs people from other origins, sometimes minors, suffer confinement, abuse, and uncertainty about how long their isolation will last. Their rights and needs are not met, but the worst thing is that they are set up in such a way so that they are invisible to the majority; people don't know that they live next to a racist prison. With euphemisms and alarmist justifications, their terror and suffering become invisible to the outside world.

MRR: "Juntos ellos y ellas", meaning "Together, them (male) and them (female)" is a great song, but the lyrics are kind of a mess. I think you confuse institutional feminism with radical feminism. On the other hand, "Juntos ellos y ellas" is open to wide interpretation, so I'd like it if you could clear this up a bit.

Well, the song is a chronological history of the struggle for the emancipation of women and how it has also resulted in situations that are not very emancipatory. In some cases, feminism has been assimilated to institutional, legal, and repressive mechanisms, like in institutional feminism or the pseudo-feminist shit that companies sell us when they want to widen their consumer base...In other cases, like in some radical feminisms, we've seen that in some sectors they attack (all) men, instead of working towards the empowerment of women. It creates a false violent opposition that seems very spectacular but in our opinion it distracts from the true enemy: patriarchy and domination that many women still suffer in all aspects of life.

"Juntos ellos y ellas" is a song against sexism, that searches for a form of feminism that doesn't substitute one injustice for another. We believe in inclusive struggle that doesn't attack male friends just for being men or heterosexual. There are true monstrosities in our environment when it comes to this topic, attacks on feminine sensuality, desire, and ways of loving. We don't think it's fair. Relationships between people should be horizontal and self-reflective, but the rest of the decisions depend on what is decided by those who participate in them. We participate in a lot of mixed collectives and some of us have "mixed" relationships and we think it's degrading that some people write off our male friends just because they are guys, or they accuse women of supporting abuse because they sleep with



Felix Rodrigo Mora and Prado Esteban are two contemporary Spanish thinkers who were related to anarchist circles for a while. They were kicked out because of their fierce rejection of feminism, defense of the traditional family structure, and their denial of the historic oppression that the LGTBQ community has suffered.

Immigrant Internment Centers (CIEs) are prisons where immigrants are held pending deportation. They function based on racist and classist principles. They form part of the European Union's mechanism for controlling the influx of cheap labor. Many organizations and individuals have reported cases of torture, rape, abuse, and murder. Frontex is the company that is in charge of guaranteeing the impermeability of European borders through measures such as giving orders to round up immigrants in certain areas or countries.

Sota Terra is a small Barcelona collective that organizes DIY/Punk shows.

Musigrama is a recording studio where famous artists have recorded, such as Camarón, Burning, Bebo Valdes and Paco de Lucia.

men. In the scene in particular there is still a lot of work to be done in terms of gender issues. We believe that a part of radical feminism has opted for searching for easy slogans, the spectacle, and performance, and has often forgotten about the serious questions, the work, and daily actions that are consistent. In addition—and this is really fucked—having a different opinion to certain feminist factions makes you "anti-feminist." Healthy debate has become taboo. And we think this sucks.

On the other hand, there are other feminist initiatives that we do identify with and participate in. They have nothing to do with F.R. Mora and P. Esteban, by the way.

"Junto ellos y ellas" is pretty simple for us: on the one hand it's a call to fight hand in hand in the struggle for equity in terms of gender and to eliminate domination in relationships, without discrimination between sexes. Below is part of the text that accompanies the lyrics on our Bandcamp page:

[...] For us, fighting gender-based oppression and all other oppression, has to do with creating new paths which differ from those used by governing officials, judges and mafiosos. It's an ethical obligation to accompany and support all of those who have suffered devaluation and abuse. We want to do it through our own means and without humiliating or criminalizing all men just for being men, judging them all based on the actions of just one part. We want to avoid taboos and singular discourses, manipulation, silence, and fear. We believe in giving ourselves the opportunity to make mistakes in order to be able to recognize our errors and learn with our friends who struggle, little by little constructing relationships of love and friendship, erotic relationships that are all more honest, horizontal and just between genders, whatever they are. [...]

MRR: I love the song "Balones fuera." Tell us a little about the lyrics. Do you think there is an excessive tendency to blame the system for people's addictions and diseases?

For sure. It seems that if you are an anarchist you are supposed to be against everything, even stuff that works. When we don't have alternatives or answers, we rant about what there is, and sometimes we prefer to do terrible things in order to not doing the established ones. And this is dumb. Clearly the system is full of shit that ruins our health, heads, and our lives, but that's not an excuse for everything. In order to be credible you have to be able to discern between what's not working well and what is, even if it's coming from capitalism or the State. We think it's necessary to be responsible and not make excuses for everything that's out of our control or that we aren't familiar with. Blaming everyone else for all that is bad only makes it harder to confront the real problems. Sometimes we do things wrong or we screw up, and we don't want to look away, but rather try to improve, to learn, and move forward. We have a lot of people close to us who have suffered or continue to suffer from mental illness. It is way more common than we think, and even though the way our society is set up and the way we relate to people, with wage labor and lack of real social networks has something to do with it, we don't accept this as the only explanation. First off, it would be kind of insincere and hypocritical to think that there wouldn't be suffering in a society without classes or hierarchy. Secondly, people are in bad shape and it's our responsibility to look for relief, well being, and help for our friends and family.

MRR: Okay, while we're at it, let's get epic. What do you think anarchy can do to make this world a little less shitty? What would Durruti do in the current context in order to make our lives more livable?

At the moment and in a condition as lethargic as the one we live in these days, anarchy could wake us up, recuperate the things we do, live, or suffer, and take the reins of what we are: make ourselves more conscious of our habits, be self-critical, not conform, work to be more honest, and question our truths and practices continuously without worrying about absolute consistency. Share our fears with each other and attack those who maintain injustices.

The struggle for anarchy contains things that give us strength and hope, like solidarity, camaraderie, and ethics. These are words that are a bit hard to swallow because we are imperfect and contradictory in nature. But there is a fundamental thing that attracts us, and it's not trying to acquire power, but constructing a society where mechanisms of domination don't exist. We don't think that this is going to happen overnight—we have a lot to learn from those who have passed and who gave everything for their ideas. Today, it's the daily work of a lot of enthusiastic people that gives us hope. We see every day that there are tools and means of human contact and relations, without the mediation of merchandise, coexisting and struggling with conflicts through assemblies, without institutions or hierarchies. These are forms that demand some more effort perhaps, but as Decisión said: "Who said it'd be easy?"

MRR: Future plans as a band?

We are in the process of releasing a split with Duelo and are writing songs for another one with Lucky Malice. Next year we are thinking about crossing the Atlantic again, but we'll see. Of course, we really want to. And well, we'll keep playing and practicing every week which is one of the best parts.

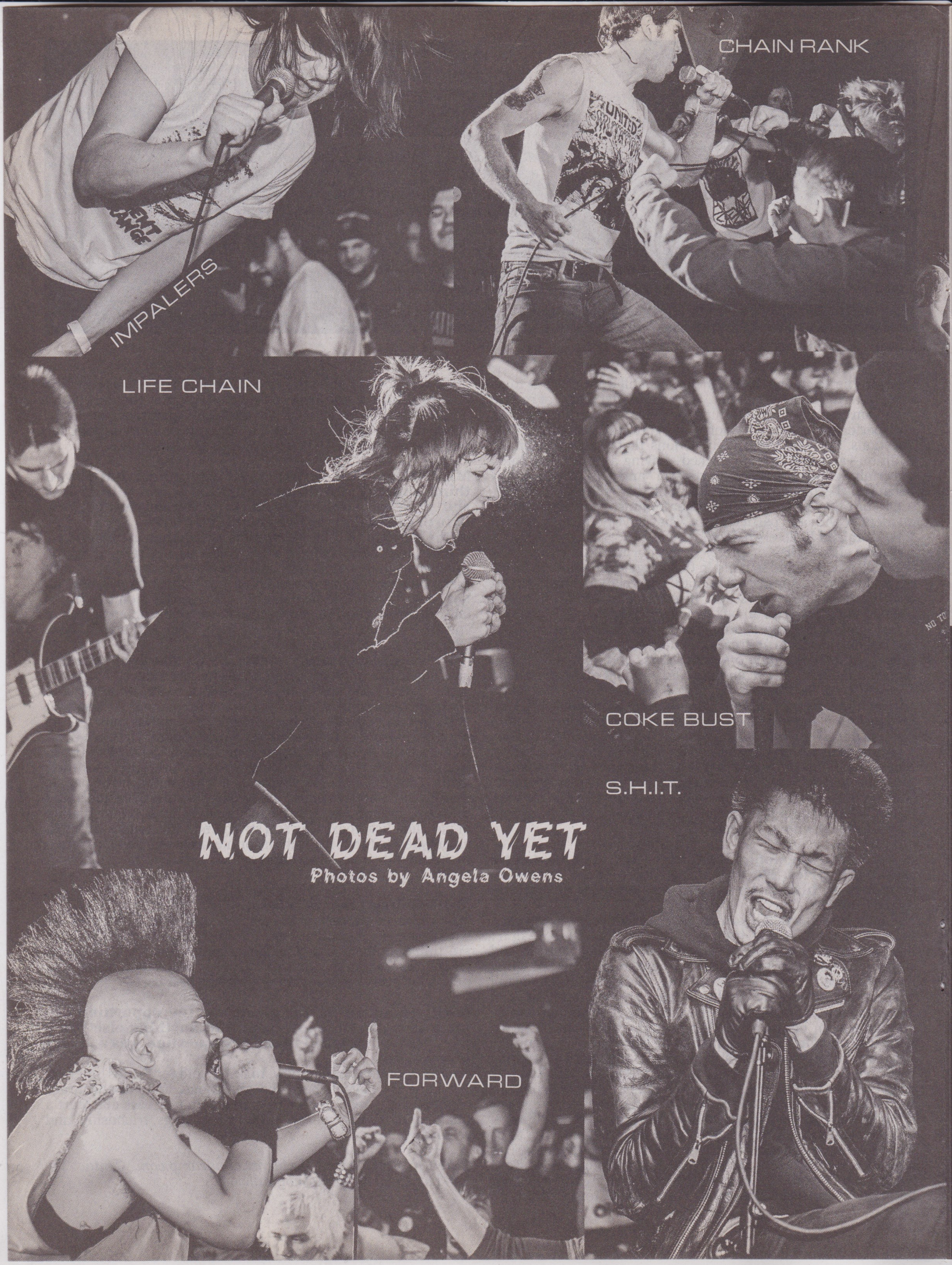
MRR: Thanks a lot for giving me the opportunity to interview you all. I love you. Add anything else you'd like. Alex, what I said in the first question was a joke. I love you too.

Thanks a lot for the interview, to *MRR*, and for Frutos' interest. We hope we haven't been too obnoxious, and we encourage anyone who is reading this to grab a guitar or bass and start a punk band, it's pretty easy and very fun. Hugs, friendship, and rebellion.

Listen to Accidente at accidente.bandcamp.com. Contact the band at accidentepunk@hotmail.com.

NOT DEAD YET

Photos by Angela Owens



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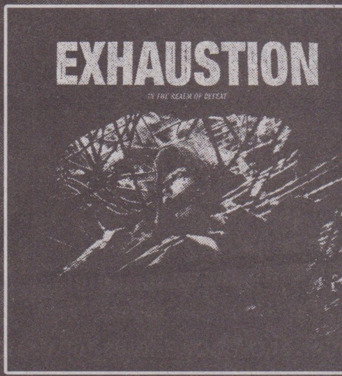

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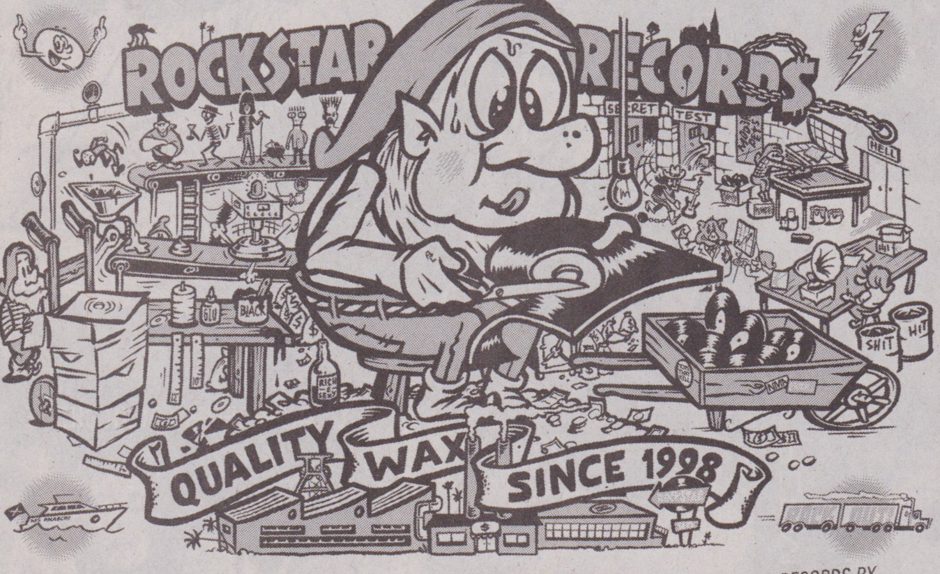

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QUANGO

Quango is one of the most exciting bands from the recent London punk scene. Their excellent demo was pressed on a 7" in 2013 and quickly sold out. With a sound harkening back to much earlier times, it's certainly music for pleasure. Chris Low was kind enough to answer these interview questions in July 2014. Introduction and interview by Erik SN of Negative Insight zine. Photos by Olga Zarutskaya, Peyvand Sadeghian and the band.

MRR: How did the band come together? How does it differ from previous bands you've been in? What's the current lineup?

The present lineup is Richard Lewis on vocals, David Barnett on guitar, Johnny White on bass, and myself on drums. Quango first came about through my friend and original Quango guitarist Nuno, who suggested forming a band with another mate of his, Richard Lewis of Hygiene. We subsequently met up, got along great, and at our very first practice came up with four songs, the three on the EP ("Fatality," "Living In A Shithole" and "Quick Quid") and another, as yet unreleased, called "Viva Il Papa." We recorded the EP after only about five or six practices and never even expected it would be released on vinyl. We were amazed by the incredible reaction it got and all the interest it generated. Due to one reason or another, we only played a few gigs at this time, originally with Richard also playing bass. Nuno then left the band and was later replaced by my flatmate and Part 1 bassist, David Barnett, who joined on guitar, along with Johnny White, who also plays in Hygiene, and Richard joining on bass. So Quango is now 50% Hygiene; 50% Part 1. Apologies for it all being very complicated and incestuous! Hopefully this lineup will stay together for a while, as it seems pretty solid. So far!

MRR: Having played in prominent anarchist and political punk bands like Political Asylum, the Apostles, and Oi Polloi, did you feel a need to get away from serious politics with a project like Quango?

Obviously I think punk and politics go hand in hand and can't imagine it any other way, but after nearly 35 years of banging on about the same subjects in song lyrics you would think—and hope—bands might think of some other subjects to cover. The Quango songs have themes that are political, but we're not about trying to shove any message down anyone's throat. We like to think people are intelligent enough to interpret the lyrics and any "message" they may have without it being spelled out for them. But to answer your question, it's not a conscious departure from bands I've played for in the past. Quango is just a lot more fun, while Part 1 remains a more "serious" project.

The Quango songs have themes that are political, but we're not about trying to shove any message down anyone's throat. We like to think people are intelligent enough to interpret the lyrics and any "message" they may have without it being spelled out for them.

MRR: I had to look up the meaning of a quango, as I'd never heard the word before your band. Can you please explain what it is for other ignorant Americans like me?

Quango stands for quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization. It's not a term you hear much in politics now, but you did hear it a lot in the 1980s. Quangos basically functioned in the drawing up of government policies and were non-governmental bodies that served the purposes of the government, an example being the prison system. They served a purpose in giving governments a degree of separation from policy and its implementation and a get-out clause should they fuck up (i.e., when there was a wave of prison riots in the '80s, they could blame the quango rather than government and legislature).

MRR: I can't help but feel that the demo 7" sounds so much like a lost Rough Trade release or UK DIY record, right down to the older looking layout and cover. How intentional was the sound, premise, and aesthetic of the band? Were you consciously influenced by early Rough Trade releases or UK DIY bands, like the Desperate Bicycles or Scrotum Poles?

I wouldn't say those bands you mention, but aesthetically, I must admit the Six Minute War and Fallout 7"s were a bit of an influence graphically, as I have always *loved* their appearance and that whole early '80s photocopied A4 sheet folder around a 7" samizdat DIY aesthetic. Musically, it wasn't anything deliberate and more a matter of the songs being recorded in a friend's garden shed (really!) on a six-track Tascam recorder, which is about as basic as you can get other than a ghetto blaster. I'm an absolute perfectionist and utterly obsessive when it comes to graphics and typography in particular, and it took days of work to get the look and feel of the cover absolutely right. One of the images used is from an early 1980s photojournalism mag, which, by strange coincidence, both Richard and I found we had and loved a certain photo in. All the images and fonts used have a reason to be there and some (hidden) meaning or significance. More than anything, I just wanted it to look like a record I know I would buy were I to see it in a shop myself and have no idea about it other than the sleeve. I'm certainly as proud of the cover as I am of what's pressed on the vinyl, which is something I can't say for many of the other records I've played on.

MRR: From an outside perspective, British culture seems very forward-focused, in that retro music is nowhere near as popular as it is here in America. For instance, there are few, if any, bands from England that sound like Discharge, Sacrilege, or Ripcord, yet there have been numerous bands from the States in recent years citing old UK bands as an influence and emulating their style. Why do you think this is, and what made you want to play a style heavily based on older bands?

Interesting question. Personally speaking, some of the punk bands I have always liked most have been ATV, Gang of Four, Crisis, Joy Division/Warsaw, early Public Image Ltd., Six Minute War, Fallout, the Rondos and other late '70s/early '80s stuff. Richard, Nuno and I all shared many of those influences, which is probably why the EP tracks sound like they do, but it certainly wasn't in any way whatsoever a deliberate emulation of those bands' sounds. I'd regard that as a very pointless exercise. Love Discharge (who doesn't?), but sorry to say I don't know Sacrilege or Ripcord. And I must admit I don't really know much about American punk bands, as I never got into the hardcore scene, though I do love Flipper.

MRR: With less focus in England on contemporary bands so closely resembling older bands, how has the reception been to the 7" and live?

We've only played a few gigs so far. The best ones have been with Irish band the Number Ones last year, who we are looking forward to playing with again this month, and also with American indie band Howler, who had actually asked for us to play with them on their London date, as they had got hold of the EP in Minneapolis and loved it! They were great guys and that's probably the best gig we've played so far. There's even a wonky video clip of us on YouTube if you search for "Quango Oslo."

MRR: When reading interviews with old UK punk bands, many mention how difficult it was getting noticed because they weren't from London or how thrilled they were to finally get their first London gig. Being based in London, do you feel that gives you more exposure or an inherent "credibility" that other bands from less culturally prominent areas might have to fight for?

To be honest, I think it's possibly the opposite. There are now so many gigs going on in London that I don't even hear of most of them. And because everyone now seems to rely solely on Facebook to promote events, if you aren't lucky enough to know anyone "invited" to an event there's a chance it might escape your orbit! I certainly know many other areas in the UK (not to mention abroad) that have much, much better punk scenes than London. Though I am only speaking for myself, I wouldn't say Quango have any great affinity with certain aspects of the London punk scene, and in fact have possibly had greater support from bands, promoters and individuals that have no involvement with it.

MRR: Can you please describe what the song "Fatality" is about? Is it based on any actual events, or is it completely fictitious? It's my favorite song on the EP and kind of reminds me of Velvet Underground's "The Gift" with the spoken verses. I love it.

The words are recited verbatim from a news story in the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper that Richard had with him at the band practice where we came up with the song! He just read them out whilst we were jamming the tune and they seemed to fit so well he cut out the story and they became the lyrics to the song. I've always liked songs that just have a spoken narrative but hadn't considered "The Gift" similarity before, though you're absolutely right. The Apostles had a few songs structured like that too, "Last Train To Hellsville" and "A Rebel Without A Cause" being two which spring to mind. Though I suppose Gang of Four "Love Like Anthrax" would be the best known example, or the part in Joy Division "No Love Lost"—both fantastic songs, and by bands we all love, so perhaps it was a subconscious influence that crept in?

MRR: Are there other contemporary London bands that you feel an affinity with?

Part 1, Hygiene...We all like Sleaford Mods, though they aren't from London.

MRR: Why was the song "Viva Il Papa" left off the 7" version of the demo?

That was the decision of the guy who put the 7" out. It certainly should have been on the original release, though, as someone described it as being like a cross between Rudimentary Peni and the Velvet Underground, perhaps it wouldn't have fit in too well with the others? If anyone would be interested in reissuing the EP, they're welcome to contact us at quango.ok@hotmail.com and they'd be more than welcome to add "Viva Il Papa" to the release. It's my favorite of our songs as well.

MRR: What are the plans for the future? Do you have any new releases planned?

Nothing at present but, now that we have a stable lineup, we hope to write more songs and gig more. Hopefully if all goes well we will record something in the future.

MRR: Well, records are what people love to read about and what makes zines sell, so can you please list your top five favorite UK DIY releases?

Ohhhh...if by DIY you mean independently released 7"s, my top five would have to include Six Minute War *More Short Songs*, Fallout *Conscription*, Part 1 *Funeral Parade*, the Apostles *Blow It Up, Burn It Down, Kick It Till It Breaks*, and Ramleh *8 Ball Corner Pocket*. Please note I didn't drum on that first Apostles EP or Funeral Parade. I just love those two records and have done since the first time I ever heard them!

Contact Quango at quango.ok@hotmail.com.

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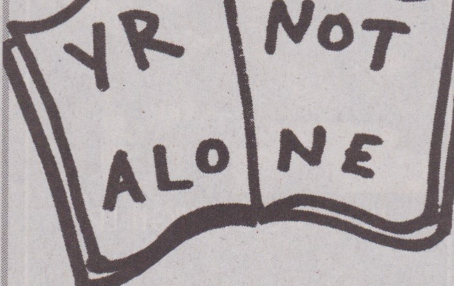

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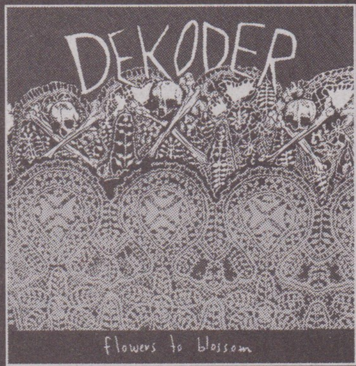

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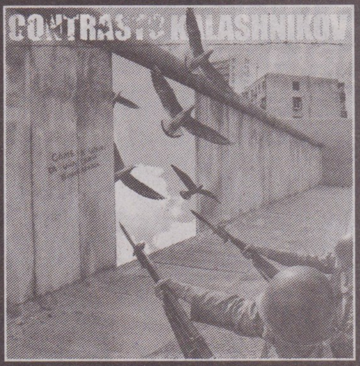

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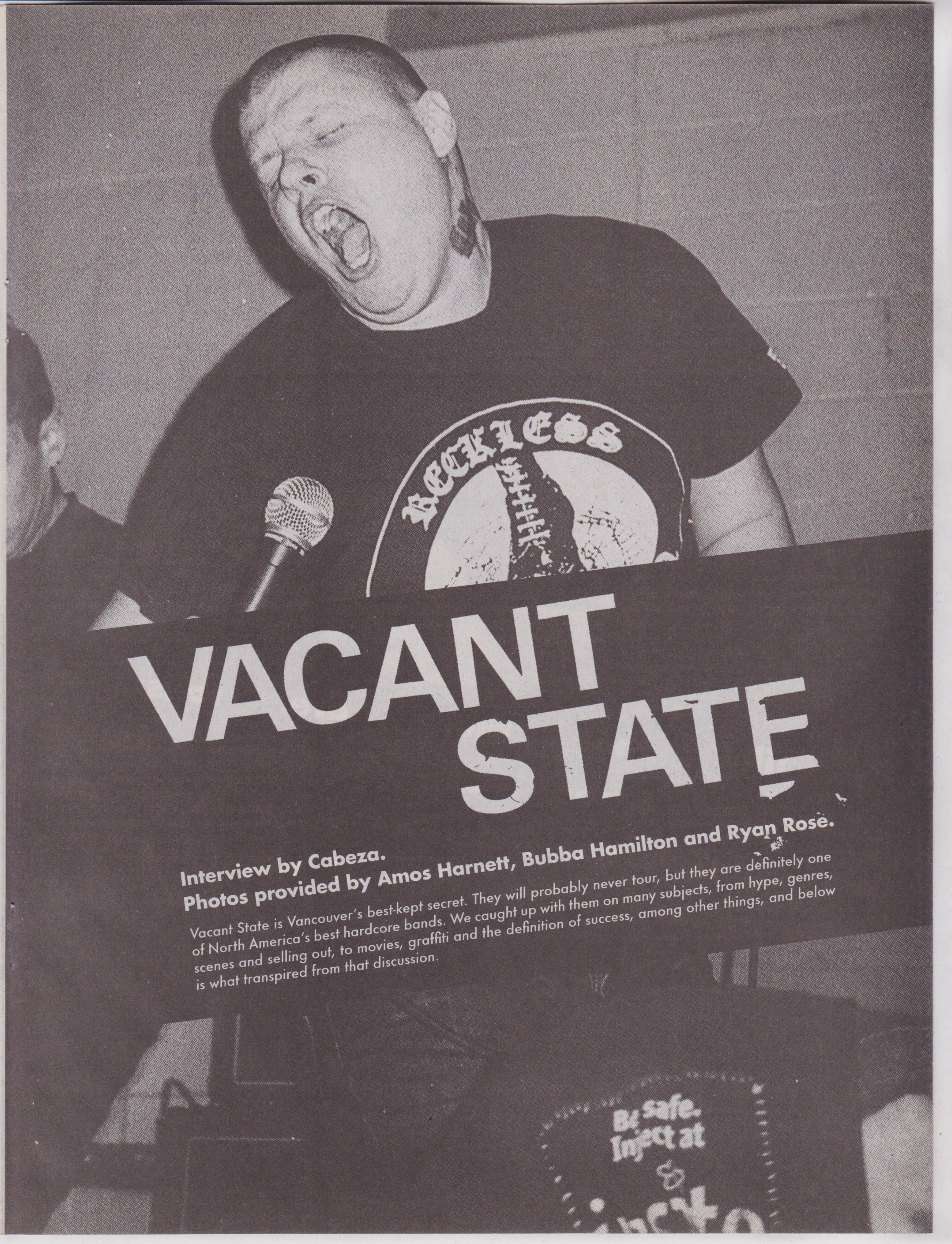
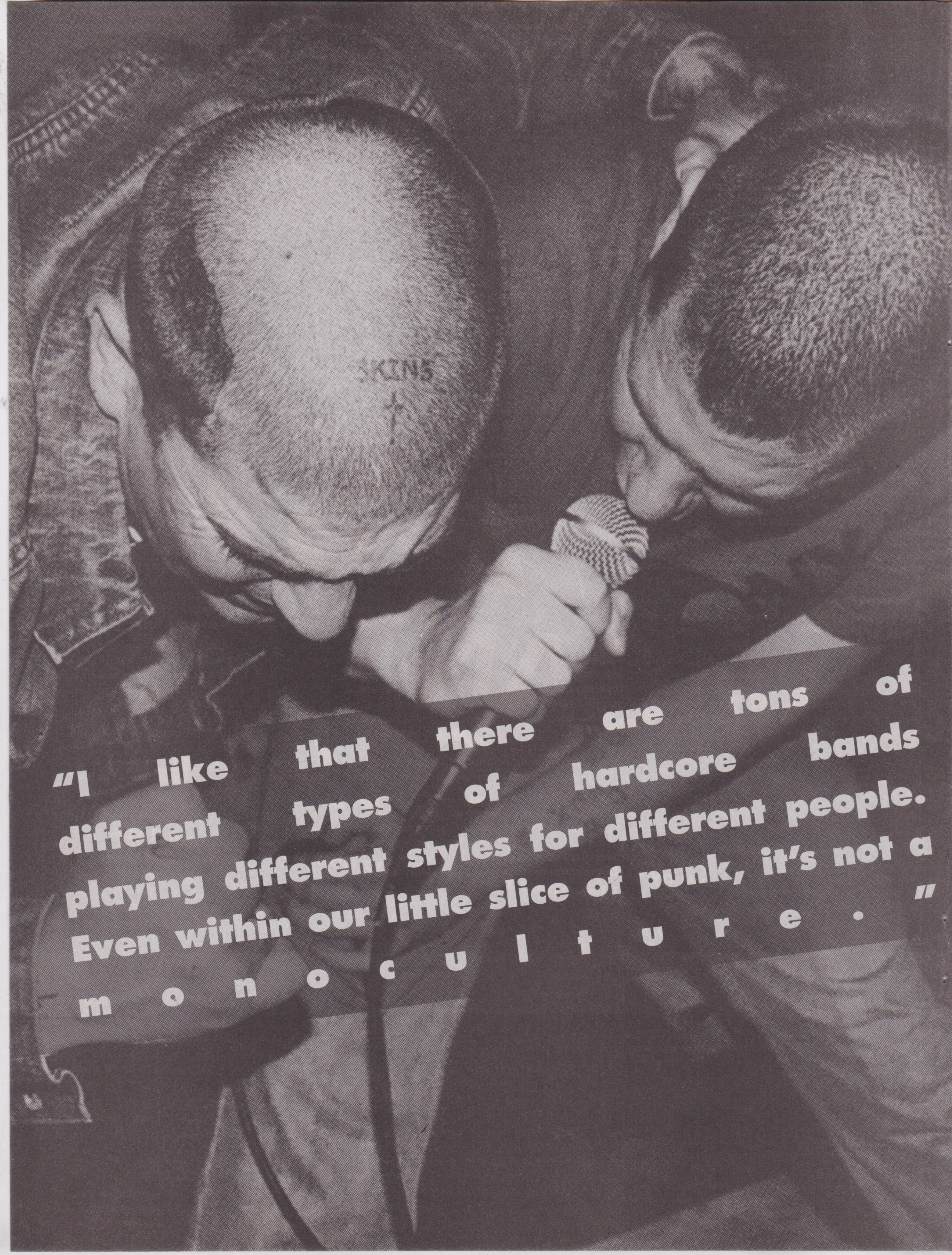


VACANT STATE

Interview by Cabeza.
Photos provided by Amos Harnett, Bubba Hamilton and Ryan Rose.

Vacant State is Vancouver's best-kept secret. They will probably never tour, but they are definitely one of North America's best hardcore bands. We caught up with them on many subjects, from hype, genres, scenes and selling out, to movies, graffiti and the definition of success, among other things, and below is what transpired from that discussion.



"I like that there are tons of different types of hardcore bands playing different styles for different people. Even within our little slice of punk, it's not a m o n o c u l t u r e . "

Vacant State is

Adam: Guitar

Big Purp: Drums

Gustav: Bass

Mark/Kram: Guitar

Terry: Vocals

MRR: One of you guys said to me "There are more hardcore bands right now than in any moment in history, but I could not care less about current hardcore bands." I couldn't agree more. Why is this? Do you think there is an oversaturation of hardcore? What makes a band good or bad? Is hardcore still necessary and as urgent as it was in the '80s?

Mark: I wouldn't say that I "couldn't care less about current hardcore bands." I'll put it this way: I think there might be more good hardcore bands right now than ever before in the history of the genre, and more good records being released than ever before. However, very, very few of them are essential. Vacant State included. We make good records, no doubt, but if you don't have our records in your collection you really aren't at much of a loss. There are numerous other bands that came before us and pioneered the style we play. They can fill that space in your collection. You can still have a very firm grasp on hardcore music without being familiar with our records, or the records of most current hardcore bands. On the other hand, many of the early records from the original hardcore bands I would consider "essential." Stuff like Negative Approach, Minor Threat, Black Flag, etc., etc. Even if you don't care for that stuff, those records are essential pieces in the puzzle of understanding hardcore. Without being at least familiar with them, you will be at a loss when it comes to comprehending this music. And those are just a few American bands I mentioned. Of course you could make a list of "essential" records from all different regions of the world. Many, many current bands are highly derivative of stuff that has already occurred in the past. A copy can be good—in fact, it can sometimes even sound better than the original—but it can never be "essential."

Terry: I don't know who said that. It definitely wasn't me. There are tons of current bands that I like and that I think are good. As far as it being as necessary or urgent as it was in the '80s, I mean, that's all a matter of opinion. It's not as new or fresh as it was in the '80s, but that doesn't mean it doesn't resonate just as much today as it did back then for a lot of people. As far as DIY stuff, I think shit is still done the same as it was when it comes to booking shows and putting out records. Obviously the internet has made it easier. But, I like what I like and I don't really give a fuck about what is considered essential.

Adam: It's funny because I think, often what makes a hardcore band good is the same stuff that disinterests me. What I mean is that I love the fact that people still play hardcore that apes the first wave and is completely derivative of the same dozen records that everyone rips off. I love other hardcore stuff too, but I tend to think that's when hardcore is at its best. But, for me, and maybe this is an age thing, those types of newer bands all blend together. I've heard hundreds of bands doing it and it's nearly impossible for most of them to stand out at this point. Then, again, I'm glad it's happening because I know that people who are younger and more relevant than me are going to get stoked. Hopefully they will be inspired to check out the roots of this music. I still go check out new bands when I can, but I buy fewer and fewer new punk and hardcore records every year, simply because I know I won't really listen to them. I'd rather have some kid out there get it and be stoked without having to buy it on eBay, while my copy I listened to once collects dust on my shelf.

Gustav: I actually don't think it was me who said that either, although I certainly don't listen to much hardcore these days. I don't attribute that to not liking hardcore, however. I still like hardcore, but I honestly don't even know where I'd start looking to find info on current bands. I like my friends' hardcore bands like Bricklayer, Nudes, Keep It Clear and anything featuring members of those bands. I typically stick to Yo La Tengo and '90s rap to be honest.

Big Purp: I don't know if it's ever been necessary, but I like that there are tons of different types of hardcore bands playing different styles for different people. Even within our little slice of punk, it's not a monoculture.

MRR: What is a normal day for Vacant State members? What do you do for fun? What do you for work? What is a perfect day? What makes it a nightmare?

Mark: I play in a number of other bands, so I spend a great deal of time working on music and music related projects. I am employed as a bicycle courier. Other than that, I like to go to the woods, camp, go on bicycle trips, swim in the ocean, that sort of thing. Hippie stuff.

Terry: I work in a warehouse. What do I do for fun? I don't know. I like movies. I like to hang out. A perfect day? I don't know. Not being angry I guess. A nightmare? Life. Whatever.

Adam: I work for a local NGO that provides housing and support services to folks who face barriers to more conventional housing and accessing services. I also go to school. I don't really do anything that's "fun". On the off chance that I have free time, I typically lie in bed waiting for something more interesting to happen, but nothing ever does. Sometimes someone calls and I get up, but it's rare. If I'm already up, my main pastime is walking up and down the street I live on. I get to shows when I can.

Gustav: I work for the provincial government as an advocate in the youth prison system and I also do some outreach stuff downtown. A perfect day would be get up late, have an expensive brunch, go back to sleep. Maybe go for a sauna or bike ride. For fun I like to do mostly fun things. Especially outdoors, which is why I live in Vancouver. Lots of Gore-Tex here.

Big Purp: I work about 80 hours a week on movie sets. I usually use the rest of my time to play in other bands, pursue sexual relationships, do drugs, get drunk and occasionally do some outdoor recreation.

MRR: Vancouver is always in those stupid "top five most livable cities in the world" lists that rich people love to read about. Being such a livable place, why are you so angry live? What do you like and what do you hate?

Mark: Well, you have to think about whom those type of lists are directed at. "Most livable" for whom? Of course Vancouver is a beautiful city and has a lot of positive qualities, but as the cost of living continues to rise, it is becoming a playground for the elite. The city is changing rapidly and becoming more and more upscale. It's becoming a much more orderly and regulated place. Many of the elements of the city that made it livable, to me, are considered undesirable by investors and those with money, so while it may be on the list of top five livable cities in the world, it is becoming increasingly unlivable to me.

Terry: I don't know. As far as those lists go, it's kinda stupid. Yeah it's an expensive city to live in and I guess if you have money it's the most livable, but definitely not for me or most of the people in this band. As far as being angry live...It's angry music and there're some who feel they have to cater to the style of having an angry image, but I think everyone who's in this band, or this scene, already has that in them. Everyone who's here is angry or fucked up about something.

Adam: Anger is contextual, I guess. The proliferation of the whole "first world problems" tag has made it seem like you shouldn't get upset because someone else has it worse. But we all have the hand we've been dealt and when things are shitty, relative to our experience of when things are not, it sucks. Like those guys touched on, Vancouver is becoming increasingly unlivable for folks who aren't moneyed. I'm lucky to have a union job that I can get by on, but I don't have savings so basically I'm always one paycheck away from eviction. Is that unlivable aspect changeable? Maybe. I would like to see more people get involved beyond complaining on Facebook about this kind of stuff. Somehow the idea of protesting and grassroots organizing has become silly to these same people who complain about local government. I don't see much changing any time soon. There's a lot of interesting community activism going on in the city, but the numbers tend to be so small that they are easily ignored.

Gustav: I'm by no means an angry person, but no human being alive today needs to look far to see, find, or feel things that are anger-inducing. In my line of work I'm surrounded by marginalized and stigmatized people, and seeing the injustices these people fall victim to causes me more anger than anything else. Thankfully, I'm in a position to do something with that anger, whether it's snitching on a shitty prison guard, or playing a show with this band. There are plenty of outlets for me to at least try and turn my fussiness into something positive. I'll spare everyone the list of things I hate and love, and leave that to Big Purp.

Big Purp: It's pretty good for poor people, too, compared to most other places I could think of. Pretty much everywhere else in Canada is a frozen arctic hellscape. Most of my anger comes from impotent rage against the rise of the fascist police state, which is an ongoing problem. Also every wannabe cool guy jerkoff from nowhere Canada moves here right after high school, which is kind of ruining it, but no big deal.

MRR: When I see Vacant State play, I see a bunch of angry people playing hardcore. But then I met you, and you are all sweethearts. What is the deal here? Are you tough or not?

Mark: I have a multi-faceted personality.

Terry: Sweethearts? Some of us are definitely not sweethearts. But I think we're all pretty nice people, but angry in our own ways, like I said. Definitely not tough, but I don't think any of us pretend to be tough either, at least I don't think so.

Adam: I'm pretty angry and miserable most of the time, I guess. It's awful. But I don't see how you can't be angry these days if you're paying attention. People think me being grumpy is a shtick but

it's not. It's a fairly horrible way to live. It's why I like to sleep so much. I generally try to be nice to people with varying degrees of success. Last time I checked, I wasn't tough, but who knows?

Gustav: I'm not tough. I typically lose fights. I haven't yet been able to shed the mantle that my ultra left-leaning pacifist parents passed on to me, so if I do get in a tangle and I'm usually left feeling all kinds of terrible guilt and shame. That being said, don't test my fade. Whatever, I'm 32 years old. Fighting is corny and in most cases unnecessary for someone my age. You get more bees with honey.

Big Purp: I'm not really very nice but you might be fooled into thinking so if you don't know me very well. One of the first times I met Goo he tried to fight my friend for spraying a fire extinguisher off in front of his house. So, I pinched his cheek and called him a lil' cutie pie. Then he apologized to me for like two hours.

MRR: There is an obvious lack of women at hardcore shows compared to other DIY shows in Vancouver. Why do you think this happens? Does this bother you?

Mark: This is a question that I have been asked over and over for as long as I've been playing in hardcore bands. And for good reason—it's a relevant question to consider. I really appreciate it when women are involved in hardcore and I would like to see more of that. On the other hand, I have to admit that I also enjoy many of the elements of hardcore that are usually considered very "male." Some of the things I appreciate about hardcore are probably some of the very same things that some women find off-putting. But with that said, I encourage women with an interest in getting involved and expressing their vision of what hardcore could or should be to do so.

Terry: I understand, but it doesn't bother me. It's not as if anyone in this band has anything against women coming to shows or being in bands. I can understand some women being put off by the physicality of some shows, or some people getting bummed out by shit getting a bit too rowdy. I understand. This music isn't for everybody. I don't really think about it too much. If they wanna be here they can; if they don't, that's fine.

Adam: Like Mark, this is a question I've been asked a lot over the years and I think it's something we need to consider and discuss but should be careful about drawing assumptions on. Especially if we're sitting around as a group of men without engaging women in the conversation. The whole physicality/male behavior argument has never sat that well with me because it tends to be pretty essentialist in nature and reinforces this idea of women as delicate non-physical types. I have female friends who box or play contact sports, but don't go to punk shows. And really, if you look around the room at a hardcore show, the majority of men often aren't in the pit either, it's often less than half of the room. In talking with women about why they've lost interest in hardcore or never felt that they had a place—and this goes for punk in general—I've more often heard about not feeling respected as a thinking person and individual with something to say. I'd invite men to consider whether you're as quick to engage women at shows in conversations about anything from politics to record collecting to guitar tone. Do you just assume these are things that women wouldn't be interested in discussing? Why? I'm not removing myself from this. It's very, very difficult to grow up in a patriarchal society and have it not influence you, even when you're aware of it. I'm just saying that folks should check themselves a bit when it comes to the homogeneity of any subculture.

Gustav: What Adam said.

Big Purp: Yeah, I think you'd have to ask the women who don't go to hardcore shows about that one. They'd probably say, "Because it's fucking stupid," and they would not be wrong. My roommate plays in a real cutesy twee pop band and there are almost no guys at their shows, so there you go.

MRR: In a DIY punk world where bands tour with two-week-old, super-hyped demo tapes, why hasn't Vacant State toured yet?

Terry: We get asked this question in every interview. We're old. We have other bands, kids, work, school, whatever. I know other people have these things too, but we can't seem to make it work. I don't know. We've toured down the West Coast as far as San Francisco and played Garbage Daze in Calgary twice, but that's about the extent of our touring thus far. I don't see us ever going out East, Canada or US, but who knows? I think everyone would like to tour, we just have to make it happen one day. Who knows?

Adam: Like Terry said, it's tough due to everyone's lives. I guess the reason we have trouble making it work isn't so much a lack of time individually, but having those times match up is incredibly difficult. Also, being in Vancouver, if you're going to do more than the West Coast or an Alberta show you need to commit to a longer stretch of time because everything is so far apart. Plus our LP has been out of print for a couple years and touring without a record to sell isn't the sweetest idea.

Big Purp: I'm the youngest at 29. It's like pulling teeth to even get these guys to play a one-off out of town. I really like touring though. I'd say about half the touring hardcore bands that blow through town kind of suck anyway, so no big deal.

MRR: So what does success mean for Vacant State?

Mark: I think success for Vacant State means quietly going about our business of making good hardcore music.

Terry: Playing the best shows we can. Putting out the best records we can. That's about it. That's all you can really do and once they're out there, that's it.

Gustav: Having at least three members alive by the time this comes out.

Big Purp: I'd be pretty hyped if we could provoke one of those moral panics on tumblr over a minor point of scene etiquette.

MRR: Some of you guys play in bands of other genres. Do you apply the same DIY ethics to those other bands? Is there any conflict inside your heads about the approach you should have for each band?

Mark: I approach each band and project differently. What may feel appropriate for one band might not for another. But I do put a lot of consideration into the moves I make with all my projects and I try to control how they operate and how they are presented, to the degree that I can. DIY is big part of all the bands I play in. Sometimes it's out of a sense of idealism, often out of necessity, and also often out of a fanatical need for control and an aversion to letting outsiders mess with my creations.

Adam: All of the bands I've played in have fallen more or less within the punk/hardcore realm. While there are certain things that I am pretty rigid on across the board, there are differences in how I approach different bands. For example, the bar show thing. Vacant State has played bars maybe a half dozen times. While it's not something I'm generally crazy about for a few different reasons, I don't have a huge moral qualm with this band doing it periodically. Conversely, I have another band in which I will never play a show that isn't all ages. The other side being that I was recently in a band that played almost exclusively 19+ venues. I'm not sure how I would conduct things in a non-punk band, as that hasn't come up yet. I was recently in a band that decided they wanted to try to make the band their living. I became increasingly uncomfortable with the decisions that were being made for the sake of money in lieu of any inklings of DIY ethics and was subsequently shown the door. I've never aspired to be a career musician, especially playing punk rock.

Big Purp: Well, obviously we have an image to maintain here, so we can't play with indie rock bands or anything. But the other bands I play in don't give that much of a shit. Everyone has to draw the line somewhere though.

MRR: Are you going to sell out? What does selling out mean for you guys? Does it even matter anymore?

Mark: I don't know if I'd say it doesn't even matter anymore, but it doesn't matter to Vacant State because we are not in a position to sell out, even if we wanted to.

Terry: We don't have the option of selling out even if we wanted to. We'll sell out the ALF house and play to like 50 people. That's selling out to us.

Adam: Obviously we're never going to be immensely popular. I don't really think about "selling out" per se, but I've definitely said "no" to shows that I felt weren't in line with my ethics. Y' know... Booked by people who weren't really involved in DIY hardcore or playing with bands who were hyped by Vice at a show that is full of people who wouldn't be caught dead at a real DIY punk show. Maybe those kinds of shows are good for "exposure" and I don't know if the rest of the band agreed with my reactionary stance in those cases. I just think that there are enough bands, venues, promoters and kids who are really involved in DIY punk and hardcore that we don't need to wait for handouts by people who downloaded the Void side of the split and think they know what's up.

Big Purp: I give like maybe 1/10 of a shit. I don't think we're very marketable.

MRR: Gustav, you are a graffiti writer. This city is clean as fuck. Where is your "art"? Are cops as friendly and polite as the rest of the Canadians? Any cool stories? Are you Mohinder? Does anyone else in Vacant State express themselves through other mediums?

Terry: I am an outsider artist, performing mainly with my own excrement to express my inner turmoil. It is my preferred medium.

Gustav: You narc! Vancouver is a super clean city compared to many other cities in the world, especially in regards to graffiti. City Hall has a sizeable budget for cleaning up all the kiddie scribbles and toy nonsense covering its walls, and enforces fines for businesses that leave graffiti on their property for longer than a few days. I keep my sprays mostly on trains, and that's almost always been the case. I have a hard time staying up late enough to go bomb the city with our deadbeat mutual friends.

Police here are just the same as anywhere else:

assholes. I know countless people, both clients and friends/graffers, who've been beaten by the VPD and left in alleyways in Burnaby or the Downtown Eastside, sometimes severely injured. I'm sure there are some great cops out there, but I've never met one. I'm confident I never will.

As far as stories go, I think graffiti often causes those who do it to look for interesting spots to paint. For me, that means off the beaten path. As a result, a lot of adventures are had; whether it's climbing on rooftops or lurking some abandoned goldmine in the mountains. Usually there is an interesting story attached to each tag or piece, some of which may or may not involve running from police, getting bitten by a Corgi, falling off moving trains, or experiencing psychic warfare on DMT, which was actually kind of fresh. I'm not going to launch into some 1,000-word diatribe on taking back public space or some corny shit. I do graffiti because it's very fun, and it helps me stave off the stuffy, uptight boringness that comes with age.

Big Purp: Graffiti is the only valid form of visual art.

MRR: Why do you play shitty shows sometimes? Why do I always have to wait for four shitty bands to play to see you guys? Has the scene in Vancouver gotten better or worse? What bands do you like and what bands do you hate? It is time to talk some shit!

Mark: I think we usually play on pretty good bills, I don't know what you are talking about. The hardcore scene in Vancouver is on a major upswing right now. There are a bunch of good local bands right now. Snøb, the Brass, and Oaf are some of my favorites, but there are many others. A lot of good touring bands have been coming through and there seems to be a new crop of younger heads going off at the shows.

Terry: We generally try to play good shows. Occasionally, we'll play a show with a band we like whose promoters maybe don't have the best taste? Usually there's at least one band we like on the bill. We're pretty picky with shows and I think we'd all prefer to play with our favorite bands. At the same time if we play with shitty bands we look better so there's that. As far as bands in Vancouver, there's a lot I like, and some I don't necessarily hate but that I just don't give a fuck about. Some I have no clue who the fuck they are. Whatever.

Adam: I think we generally play pretty good shows. Maybe my taste sucks though. Or maybe yours does. There have been a couple less-than-stellar lineups. Either way, I agree that Vancouver is on an upswing. Lots of cool bands and show attendance is generally pretty steady. There are some things that don't sit that well with me, as far as how things are and the attitudes I see, but that's all a matter of opinion and isn't really here nor there. Locally I like Kram, who has been mentioned a lot, as well as Keep it Clear, Spectres, Slow Learners, Fashionism, Systematik, and I liked Pura Manía before doing this interview. There are probably others I'm forgetting, but I doubt anyone is still reading at this point anyway.

Gustav: A few standouts for me are Fashionism, the Brass, Spectres, Snøb, Pura Manía, Kraxxa, From From, Keep it Clear, Systematik. And I love Woolworm, because as stated above, I'm not very tough.

Big Purp: Adam was in this streetpunk band who are good but always play with seriously dogshit bands. We played a couple of those shows, they weren't even that bad. Usually the other bands we play with are good. I sometimes go to shows just because I like laughing at shitty bands. You actually have no idea how bad it can get in this city. I don't wanna get into it.

MRR: Terry, you really like movies. You told me that you even had more movies than records. What are your favorite ones? Why haven't you started making movies instead of records? There is a rumor going on that some of you guys might be interested in porn acting. Is it true? Would you do it?

Terry: Maybe I was exaggerating, but I definitely have a lot of movies. It's hard to name favorites. It's easier to name favorite directors: David Cronenberg, David Lynch, Lars von Trier, John Waters, John Carpenter, Martin Scorsese, and the Coen brothers. As far as noticeable favorite movies: *Rosemary's Baby, Halloween, Taxi Driver, and Sunset Boulevard*. Honestly, I like everything from film noir to schlocky B-horror that draws a fine line between watchable and terrible. Roger Corman, that kinda stuff. As far as porn, I wouldn't say I'm disinterested in it, but I definitely won't be doing porn.

Gustav: I feel like Terry has almost certainly already done porn.

Big Purp: I've got a dick like a baseball bat so any porn directors reading this can hit me up via email. B/G only.

MRR: You have two 7"s and one 12" EP—do you like them or do you think they sound like shit?

Mark: I wasn't fully pleased with how the *Internal Conflict* record turned out, but I'm happy with all the rest of them.

Terry: I like all our records. I think *Fill the Void* and our newest 7", about to come out, are probably the best-sounding records with some of our best songs on them, even though there're still good songs on the first two 7"s. We sound better as a band on our newer stuff. I think I sound better vocally on it, too. The first 7" was really our demo. We never had one and it was recorded before we were actually a band. The second 7" was recorded only a short time later, so we'd really only been a band for about four months at that point. Then there was a one-year gap between that and our LP. I think there's a noticeable improvement, at least in my ears, from how we sound as a band to sounding better on the LP and our new 7".

Adam: I agree with Terry. I think Mark is neurotic and *Internal Conflict* sounds pretty good, too. The fact that the band actually played shows before doing the LP and now the *Chains* 7" is definitely an asset. It allowed us to record mostly everything live off the floor with relatively little fucking up. Also recording with Jackson Long is great. He knows his shit.

Gustav: I like the LP and the upcoming 7" out of all our releases. I feel like there are good songs throughout however, and I don't feel like a self-important prick saying all of our records are pretty good, if you like hardcore.

Big Purp: I think they are great because I didn't play on any of them. The new one is pretty good, I guess.

MRR: Lets talk about your new 7". Who is releasing it and when is coming out? Why should I buy your record? What makes it different from the millions of hardcore 7"s being released in 2014?

Mark: Our new EP is called *Chains*. It is being released in the USA by Warthog Speak, and in Europe by Hardware. It should be out by the time this is published. You personally should not buy the record because you've stated many times that you don't want to experience Vacant State on record, only live, in the flesh. The rest of the record-buying public should buy it because it is a good, gimmick-less, hardcore punk record. Of course, I've probably already discouraged everyone from buying it with all my talk about the "inessential" nature of our records.

Terry: Buy it if you want, or don't. I'm not in the business of trying to sell this shit. It is what it is. Like it or lump it, I don't give a fuck.

Big Purp: I played the drums on this record. I'd say I hit the cymbals the most, the snare drum about half as much, the bass drum just slightly less than that, and the tom toms just occasionally. Kram made me overdub a crash at one point. Generally, I tried to hit the drums with a pissed off kind of style but not too much wigginess. I like the songs and Terry's lyrics quite a bit.

MRR: Any last words?

Terry: Thanks for the interview. Hopefully it doesn't suck.

Adam: No.

Gustav: Shout out to Zaps FTW, Yaboi, Noway, Mock, and all the Feel This Weight and NSL dudes who will never read this. Thanks Raph!

Big Purp: I find email interviews stilted and not too pleasant to read, so sorry readers but this has been pleasant to answer. Free Palestine, nuke the whales, etc..

Vacant State's new EP Chains is out now on Hardware Records in Europe, hardware-records.com, and Warthog Speak in the US, warthogspeak.com

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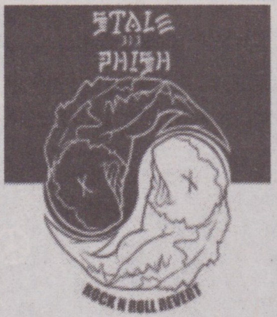

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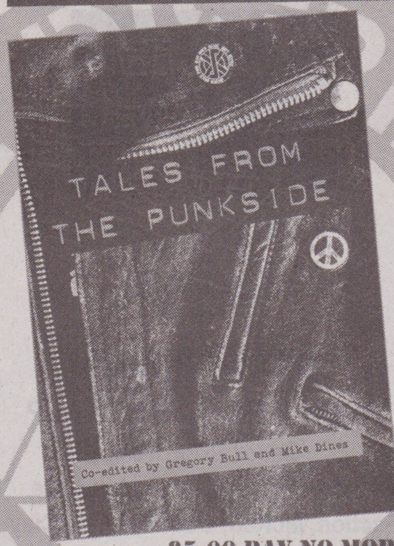

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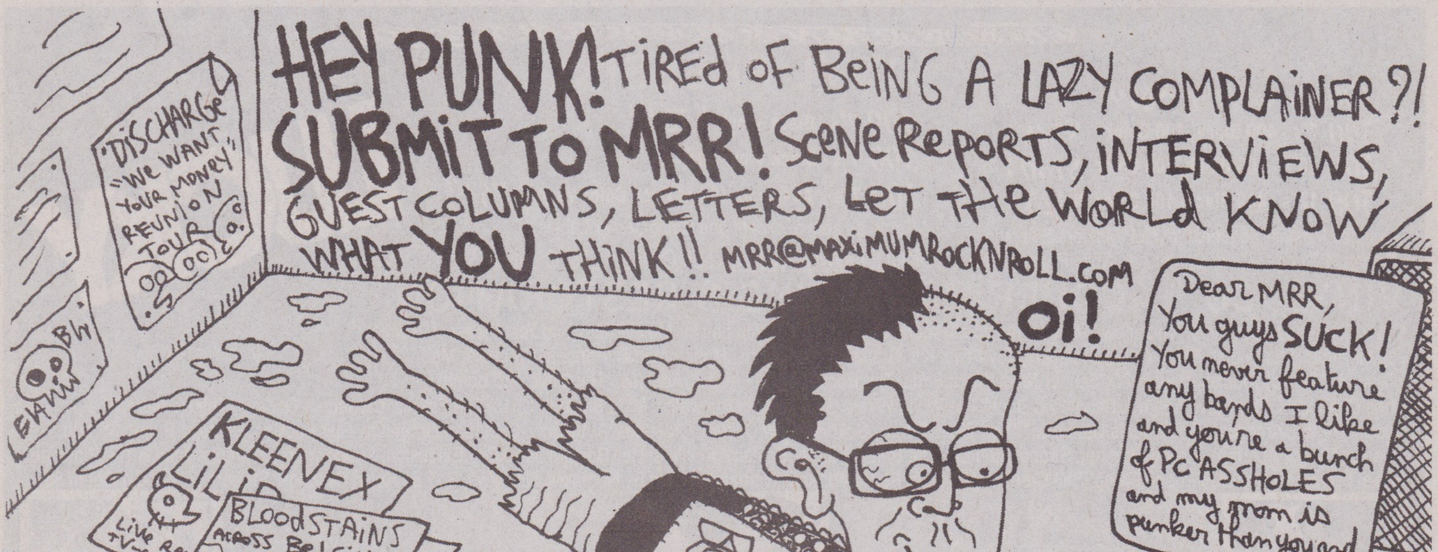


METADONA

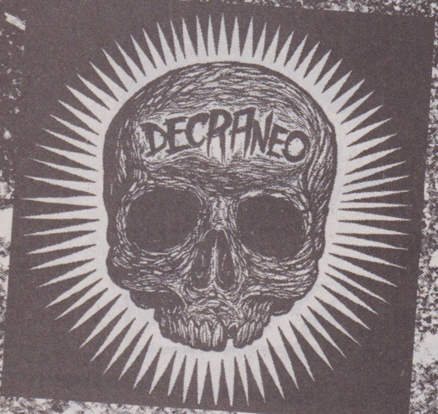
We present to you a record project that emerged from the sewers of one of the most rotten western Mediterranean islands, Mallorca. Metadona Discos is the personal initiative of Ovas, an individual with passion for ink and the most blasphemous and crude noise coming from this tourist-infested rock. We spoke with him. Interview by Bernat Mundial. Photos provided by the label.

MRR: Hello! Tell us: how and under what circumstances Metadona was born?
It was about 2010 when I decided to do this project alone. For about three years or so in 2001, I had a label named AC with a friend. We put out some records by Mallorcan bands of that era, like Mallorkaos, Disease, Phogo... but slowly we were drifting away from the label.

When I started Metadona I wanted to move records on the island, not just put them out; otherwise what is the point of getting punk records made? The long running record store in Palma, Runaway, had closed and if you wanted to snag a record you had to do it online...very sad.

MRR: Why did you decide to call the label Metadona [Methadone]? Therapy for addicts? Analgesics for pain? [laughter] Without knowing your response yet, I can say I like the name!
Aside for my work having been to distribute methadone from a truck to lined-up junkies, we imagined we are junkies of punk and our methadone is to discover new bands, to fill us with their lyrics, energy and noise. The name made me laugh and I think it fit well.

MRR: If I'm not mistaken, the label is about four years old and has already has twenty-one releases…fuck! Not bad! Besides the number of records that you have put out, I'd like to emphasize the undeniable quality, both in content and in presentation. How do you see it? Is it something you imagined when you started?
From the beginning one of the things I clearly envisioned was that the aesthetic would be of a certain level. I give as much weight to the art of a record as its music. I do not like computer designs. I like screen-printing, I dig when you open a record and it smells like paint; hand made with passion and DIY. Labels like Lengua Armada have always influenced me in that way. That label does things I wouldn't imagine, but it's not too far from what I'm doing.



MRR: In addition to releasing interesting albums from worldwide bands, like Mexico, Peru, Argentina, the label plays an important role within the island, producing, motivating and publicizing Mallorcan high quality material around the globe, like Eskoria, A.I., and Trance, to name a few. How do you think those outside of Mallorca have received these bands?

At first the plan was to do things with the bands in my city, but the thing got out of hand. I think punks can understand styles, but not necessarily borders and there are bands that need to be heard, both here and elsewhere in the world.

Those three bands you name have had very good reviews in fanzines and websites worldwide. Usually all punk bands emerging from Mallorca are usually liked, but of course everything has its audience...

MRR: Let's talk about a solid record you recently released: the *Nunca, Siempre* LP by Qloaqa Letal. Holy fuck, being Mallorcan, I honestly never imagined that this island would have a punk label that would ever put out a record like this! It's crazy! Who would imagine? I am a crazy fan of this recording and when I learned that you were releasing it, I could not believe it! How was the album done? How well is the distribution going?

I like putting out classics, pressing them onto vinyl and being part of it somehow. But honestly, it makes me much more excited that new bands like Maquina Muerta see the light of day. Also putting out records like Qloaqa Letal indirectly helps me release records by new bands.

Still, the Qloaqa record is amazing. I too was always a fan and do not understand how this recording was never released on vinyl. This edition flew, I don't know if I'll repress it.

MRR: Tell us please about future releases!

I imagine that by the time this interview comes out, you will be able to snag a Trance/Suicidas split EP from your local distro. For the beginning of 2015 the Soberanía Personal LP, an Argentinean band recorded in 1988, should be out and a split 12" with Máquina Muerta and D.H.K..

The last few months I have also been working with Txerra from R.I.P. on releasing a live R.I.P. in '84 LP, which will be out in spring 2015.

MRR: Mallorca as a punk scene...What's your view? Do you see yourself alone or with others? What projects would you like to highlight? Are interesting things happening? Give us your opinion, good things and bad things, let loose!

I think we are in one of the best times for music that I have experienced, good bands, releases, recording, touring...There are several bands that should be heard and talked about, like Trau or Desenterradas, they are so

good, *me cago en dios*. There are also many new efforts, such as Old Kids Brigade and Sangre.Azul, but we don't have any squats where we can do anything. The few places where we can play no one takes care of and there are no young people at shows.

MRR: Although the LP compilation of Mallorcan bands *Mallorca Punk* was not a Metadona Discos release, I know you were involved in both the release and distribution. What do you think of this LP? I acknowledge that I initially did not have much confidence in that record. Even though I thought we would be eating the leftover copies with potatoes on the island, it seem that copies have flown.

The truth is that I did not bet much on that album. Generally I don't like compilations, but Fede was clear and was convinced to do it. He risked and the result was very rewarding, all the records moved fast and had very good reviews.

It was a little crazy coordinating the twenty-five bands; the screen-printing was labor intensive—even the labels on the vinyl were screen-printed. Although there are bands on the comp that you may not like, the record is a Mallorcan punk document and should be in your collection.

MRR: I think it's important to note that, in addition to releasing and distributing good releases, Metadona has also played an important role in terms of the organization of shows in Mallorca for non-Mallorcan bands. For obvious reasons one can't come by car, but must travel by plane or boat. This must be taken into account to enter and leave the island. What were these shows and how did they work?

We have done some shows, but I do not have time and strength to do all the cool stuff I would like. The last shows I remember we did were Vaaska, Criminal Damage, Sudor, Criaturas, Los Crudos...always with Fede's help and the guys from Orden Mundial.

Normally they've always worked out fine, I don't remember any fuck-ups and all the bands have been happy. Having shows here is fucking hard work, there are few places to play and we have the problem of being on an island.

MRR: Being in constant contact with labels, distributors and all kinds of material from everywhere, what projects, groups, records have you going crazy? Tell us what we shouldn't miss.

I freak out over projects by Teodoro, the explosion of new Mexican bands, discovering Japanese bands...And the new Orden Mundial album is so good that I would buy two.

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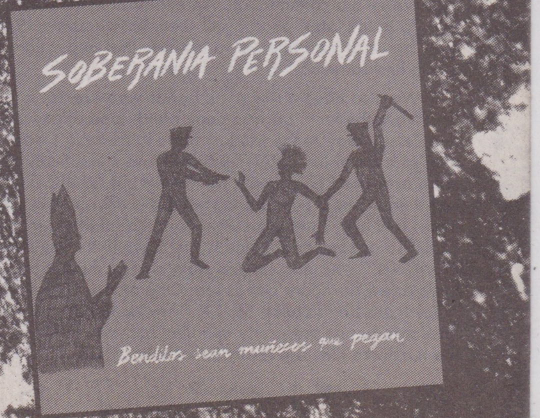
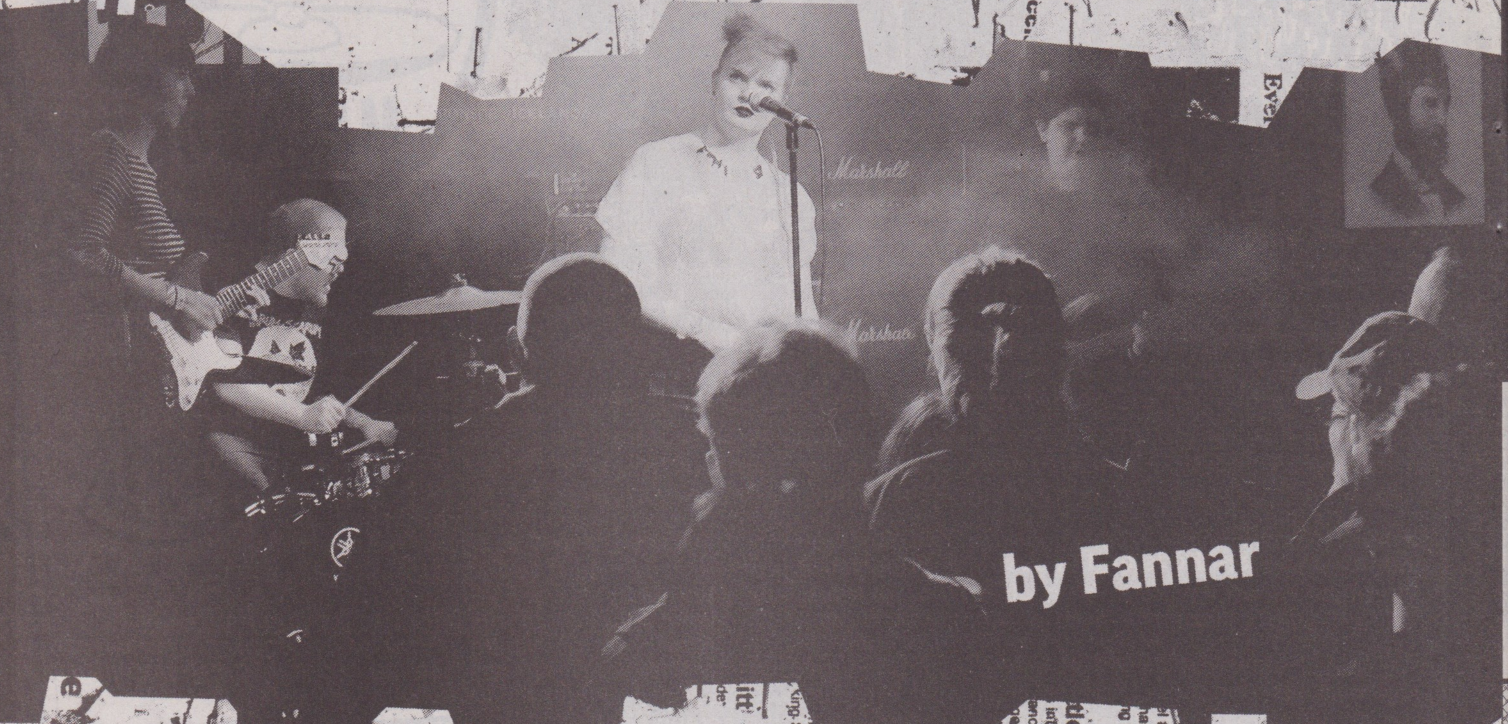


A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE ICELANDIC SCENE



by Fannar

Punk came to Iceland pretty late, around 1980 or so. Since then there have always been a few punk bands around, but the scenes kind of come and go. The last punk scene kind of dissolved and merged with the rest of the Icelandic underground in 2009, when the organic café and all-ages venue, Kaffi Hljómalind closed. Now it seems everybody's doing stuff together, whether they are punk, indie rock, noise or whatever. Well, except for metal bands. They have a strong scene and many very good bands, but I won't go into that.

Being a punk in Iceland will leave you pretty musically unsatisfied. The bands are few and local access to punk records is limited. Still, 2014 has been the most exciting year musically in a long, long time. Some people, who have been around since the 1980s, have been saying it's like 1981 again. I wasn't around back then, but mostly I think it's meaningless hype. However it's true that Icelanders seem to be really excited about music right now, and there're a few very exciting and creative bands going at the moment. Also, on the punk side of things, some bands—like my band BÖRN and cold wave bands such as KVÖL and ASKA—seem to be drawing influences, or at least responding to Icelandic punk of the 1980s. There's KÆLAN MIKLA, a dark poetry punk trio who don't have a guitar player, but their drummer sometimes plays guitar instead of drums, and BRÁK from Akureyri, a post-punk band with a hint of WIPERS, GRÍSALAPPALÍSA who seem to be trying to create a mixture of all the biggest Icelandic post-punk and alternative pop bands of the late 1970s and early 1980s, and post-punk/synth-pop newcomers ANTIMONY.

Listing the bands like this makes it sound like everybody's obsessed with the '80s. I can't really speak for anyone but myself, but I feel like, rather than a revival, it's a continuation. An exploration of what Icelandic music is, because still, 33 years later, people still seem to talk about 1981 as the high point of local music. It's an attempt to address that and create something new, while trying find some sort of a local sound.

We also have a few punk bands who are not into the '80s. PINK STREET BOYS are the local garage punk band—kind of psychedelic, kind of loud. People say they're the loudest band in Iceland. I don't think that's true, but they're a lot of fun. BRÖTT BREKKA are a relatively new band that mixes '90s math rock like POLVO with MINUTEMEN. KNIFE FIGHTS would probably not call themselves a punk band, but this is my scene report so I'll call them whatever I feel like. They sometimes sound a bit like a more indie rock PARQUET COURTS or something. Finally, we have lo-fi slimy sludge punks PANOS FROM KOMODO, who also have a slimy sludge metal band called GODCHILLA. We have a few hardcore bands too. One of the biggest local underground acts is a hardcore band called MUCK. They're super tight and chaotic. Most of the hardcore bands are pretty metallic, but not really heavy though. I guess most of the hardcore kids are really into CONVERGE.

The scene here is pretty homogenous. Mostly white, cis, and heterosexual. I feel like the only discussion the local scene has on visibility has to do with women in music, which is important of course, but I wish there was more diversity and an awareness of the importance of accessibility and diversity. I have been playing in bands with women for a long time and every now and then I'll hear that some girl decided to go for it and pick up an instrument because they saw us play. As a person with a disability, I was really inspired by that. Most of my life I've tried to act like my disability was a non-issue but, by playing with these talented women, I learned that being visible is important and wearing the disability like a badge of honor (still working on that) is important, and hopefully then sending out a message that others like me are welcome in this scene of ours. Which brings me to the next issue: venues.

Venues are few and keeping one open for long seems very difficult. We have two all-ages venues: one is a social center, and you can't book anything there if you're over 25, and the other one is really out of the way and nobody will come when you book shows there. The latter has no wheelchair access either, which also applies to almost all of the bars that host shows. There's a record store downtown, Lucky Records, where we sometimes have shows. They have pretty good wheelchair access and are all-ages, of course. We don't really have house shows here. All the young people want to live downtown, because the suburbs are boring, so pretty much everyone lives in small apartments where it's difficult to put on shows. BÖRN did play a house show with MUCK this summer in a small apartment above a kebab place. It seemed like people were going to fall through the floor. I went outside to watch MUCK from the street, since the apartment was too packed and I could see the ceiling in the kebab place bouncing like a trampoline. The people who put on the show were being kicked out of their apartment because it was being turned into one of those Airbnb places.

The whole downtown area is being killed off by the tourist industry. It feels like everything that's exciting and creative gets shut down because somebody wants to build yet another hotel. I guess we're in a transitional period now. People are still clinging to downtown despite the aggressive gentrification, because there's nothing going on anywhere else. So, instead of doing anything about it, we just sit around and hate on tourists. Not that it's their fault, but to us they are the face of gentrification. And it doesn't help getting regular messages via social media from creepy Icelandophiles about the exotic nature and purity of our culture or what-the-fuck-ever. Also, no, our bands are not inspired by fucking lava fields and glaciers. Go drown in a hot spring.

BÖRN

PUNK, PIZZA & POOP

I'm sitting alone in the back corner of Vitabar, Reykjavík's greatest dive bar and renowned burger joint, waiting for my friends to show up. At 7:15, right on the dot, guitarist Anna Guðný Gröndal arrives and tells me this is typical—the others are always late. (We're not usually the type of pals who make scheduled plans together. Just catch each other at gigs and stuff.) Eventually singer Alexandra Ingvarsdóttir and drummer Fannar Örn Karlsson show up together, as expected, since they are long-time partners. Bassist Júlíana Kristín Jóhannsdóttir gets there last, in her standard life-of-the-party mode. The children are all here.

Together they form Börn ("Children"), a post-punk band with strong leanings towards smashing the kyriarchy through radical positivity. And pizza and cats. Their tight, fast-paced melodies emanate aggression but their lyrics reflect the deep passion they share for dismantling systems of oppression—sexism, ableism, racism, homophobia, and economic injustice. They grew into their current format by way of a couple of pit stops—three of them started off as the hardcore band Tentacles of Doom, then became four as Norn. They changed their name to Börn in 2013 and that's when the children began to grow into one of the city's most buzzed-about bands. As we ate our burgers, they proved that they haven't grown up too much. Interview and intro by RX Beckett. Photos provided by Gabrielle Motola, Jeff Obermeyer.

MRR: I like how you just kind of inhaled your food, Júlíana.

Júlíana: Yeah, me and everyone in my family, we're kind of like [makes loud inhaling noise]. When I eat a burrito, I just gulp it down, otherwise it goes everywhere. It's very practical because Fannar and Alexandra eat really slowly. I just talk too much.

Alexandra: I think it's because I had really bad teeth and it kinda hurt to eat before. I've got my teeth almost fixed now but the slow eating kinda stuck.

Júlíana: I don't know what Fannar's deal is.

Fannar: I just talk too much I guess. I don't even look at the food.

MRR: You probably just need to poop more.

Fannar: Yeah, I don't poop much. I only poop every other day.

MRR: Whoa, really? That's probably gonna get rough on tour, with things getting jammed down there.

Fannar: No, I don't think so. I have super-bowels. I think I have a bowel waiting room. It just goes somewhere and hangs out for a while. It's like when you go to a different country and you're like, "I'm in a different society I wonder what the toilet situation is." So the poop is like, "I'm just gonna wait it out and see what's up." It doesn't bother me at all.

Alexandra: Sometimes he'll go a week or something, and I'm like "You have to poop!" and he's like, "No!"

Fannar: I don't!

Júlíana: Where does it go? You're not a large person! Where do you keep it?

Fannar: In my belly.

Alexandra: Have you seen his poop?

Júlíana: I don't wanna.

Fannar: It's large. It's really big.

MRR: This is a good question. Let's explore this: as a band, how many of you have seen each other's poop?

Fannar: I've just seen Alexandra's.

Alexandra: Just Fannar's poop.

Júlíana: I haven't seen Alexandra's poop but I have seen her in a diaper.

Alexandra: It was an experiment. [Laughs.] I was a teenager, obviously, and two of us were working as caretakers. So we were taking care of adults who wore diapers everyday and we started to wonder how it felt—how does it feel to wear and use a diaper? There were four of us working there who decided to try it for just an evening. We were just watching TV and hanging out in diapers.

MRR: And the results?

Alexandra: It was weird. It was really weird. [Laughs.] I peed in it, that's all, but Júlíana's ex-boyfriend pooped in it. He was outside, on a skateboard, pooping.

Júlíana: Actually, Alexandra and I lived together when we were sixteen when we'd both just moved to the city and we barely knew each other. We didn't have a bathroom door and we were too shy to poop in front of each, other so we always went to City Hall to poop. And we stole toilet paper from City Hall for a year. I mean, we didn't buy a single roll for a year.

Alexandra: That was also an experiment—see if we can get away with not buying toilet paper for a year.

Júlíana: And we did. It was easy. City Hall was right across the street so we just stole it from the city.

MRR: That is a great act of softcore civil disobedience.

Fannar: We're not very punk. We try, we just aren't.

Júlíana: [Pretending to take toilet paper] So punk! Fuck the government!

MRR: Are all your lyrics actually just about going to the toilet?

Júlíana: Some of them are.

Fannar: Most of them are! Pretty much.

Júlíana: We have to do this every day! Except for Fannar.

MRR: Anna, you're just increasingly leaning your face into your hands.

[Whole band laughing hysterically.]

Anna: It's like this at every practice.

Alexandra: We start talking about poop and Anna is like, "I have to go."

Júlíana: She's the only one who doesn't laugh when I fart. We're working on this.

MRR: Since we mentioned pooping on the bus earlier, I've heard you are possibly going on tour soon. Is that happening?

Fannar: Yeah, next spring, going to the US. The details aren't finished yet but, yeah. And we'll be doing a 7" for that tour.

Alexandra: And hopefully our LP will be on cassette by then so that we can take that with us.

Anna: So now we're trying to make new material for this new record for the US tour.

MRR: It seems like things have been happening really fast for you this year, which has been really exciting to watch. In the past few months you've gone from doing these little gigs at Dillon to now coming up on your first Airwaves with four gigs.

Fannar: It's really weird because it took us a year to actually play a show. We had recorded our first cassette six months before we ever played a show. Then we played three shows in 2011 and we didn't play another show for eighteen months, until spring 2013. And then it took us almost a year to play again, which was this year. Since then we've been playing

regularly and we've released a record.

Alexandra: Well, we played once in January, then again in May, and then our album came out in June. When that came out suddenly everyone was asking us to play shows with them and we were like, yeah! We said yes to all of them.

Júlíana: We basically didn't practice at all during our 18 months of hibernation. We were too lazy.

Alexandra: We'd be like, "Oh can you practice this day?" And the others would be like, "No ,I have to go to the movies."

[Everyone laughs, slightly embarrassed.]

Anna: And when we finally did practice, we pretty much had to start from scratch. We had almost forgotten our own songs!

Alexandra: That was a turning point for the band when I bought Moleskine books for Anna Guðný and Júlíana so they could write down their songs.

Júlíana: She actually bought us books and pens and she labelled them with our names and the name of the band.

Fannar: It changed everything.

Júlíana: It did! And now we've written like a million songs because we always used to forget them after practices.

Alexandra: Seriously. Before it was like, "Fannar how does this song go again?" And he'd be like, "Ughhh, god!" And then the next song again, "Uh,

Júlíana: It's hard being so lazy.

MRR: But that energy you say you have when you come together to practice, it definitely shows when you're onstage. Every time I see you play you seem to be having such a fucking good time up there.

Júlíana: We love it!

Fannar: I always–well, I almost always have a good time!

Alexandra: Sometimes the sound is too shitty or you make too many mistakes to enjoy your own show and you get all [makes a face like she just sucked a lemon.]

Fannar: I mean, I don't really mind shitty sound because we're punk. Most of the best shows are at Dillon or something. The problem is when you go to these slightly bigger venues and the sound onstage is not too good and everyone is standing so far away, it just feels so distant and it's so hard to click. When we're playing at a small show, even if the sound sucks, we're still kind of together. We almost touch each other.

Júlíana: I think we play our best shows when we're kind of huddled up together.

MRR: Totally. My favourite show you've played was that house gig down by Ingólfstorg with Muck, where I was literally stand-

Anna: Yeah, no poop talk! [Band laughs.]

MRR: I did prepare a speed round. Do you want to do that?

Fannar: Yeah, let's do the speed round!

SPEED ROUND:

Cat or dog?

All: Cat.

Júlíana: Both.

Pizza or burger?

All: Pizza. [Said in perfect unison.]

Pants or no pants?

Alexandra and Júlíana: No pants.

Anna and Fannar: Pants.

Júlíana: I've actually played some band practices with no pants.

Alexandra: Yeah, me too. First thing I do when I get home from work is just take my pants off, and switch into a comfy t-shirt and [all the women at once] take my bra off!

Anna: I take my pants off but then I put on comfier ones, like sweats.

Júlíana: I just like to air it out.

I don't remember this one!"

Anna: Most of our practices were spent trying to figure out how the songs were played, then we played it once and we never met again.

MRR: So in a way it's not that weird that you changed the band name, because it was like a whole new group the second time around?

Alexandra: Yeah! And we got disciplined. We decided to practice every Thursday, no exception, or you're responsible for finding a new date if you have to cancel.

MRR: Setting rules for yourself is a good way to get your shit together.

Fannar: It helps to have pressure–having a show to play or a recording to do.

Júlíana: Yeah. We are going to record an album this year. We have to. We're super lazy but whenever we are at the practice space and we start practicing it's awesome. Sometimes we're just too lazy to take the bus. We want to just hang out and pet our cats.

Alexandra: Sometimes before practice you're think, "Aw no, I want to stay at home!" But then you get there and it's awesome.

ing right in your face, Alexandra, because it was so tightly packed. And you were all squeezed in really tight.

Fannar: Yeah, that was one of the best shows we've played.

Anna: The worst show, I felt, was at Gaukurinn because I just felt like Júlíana was so far away. I was alone over on my side of the stage and it almost didn't feel like a band anymore. It just felt like we were statues that everyone was watching.

Júlíana: It helps me to look at them and to be able to read each other.

Fannar: It's a weird physical thing. It's hard to explain.

MRR: Maybe it comes from knowing each other for so long that you are able to read each others' physical cues?

Alexandra: It's stuff that you don't really notice but that the rest of the band picks up on.

Anna: We practice standing in a circle, facing each other, so that is a huge element.

MRR: Well look at that; we actually talked about band stuff!

Fannar: I keep the pants on at all times. These never come off. I poop through the pants. I have a little flap on the butt.

Stay home or go out?

All: Stay home!

Jay-Z or Kanye?

Fannar: Jay-Z.

Alexandra and Júlíana: Nicki Minaj.

Kate Bush or Stevie Nicks?

All: Kate Bush.

Vinyl or Tape?

All: Vinyl.

Skateboard or bike?

Alexandra, Anna and Júlíana: Bike.

Fannar: Neither.

Börn's self-titled debut LP is available now from Paradísarborgarplötur Records (pbppunk.com). Find the band online at borndeyja.bandcamp.com

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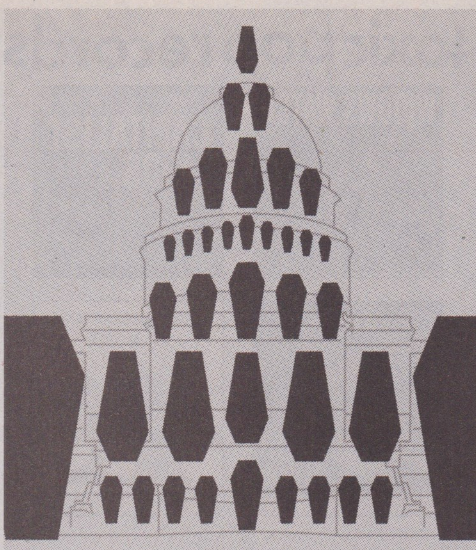

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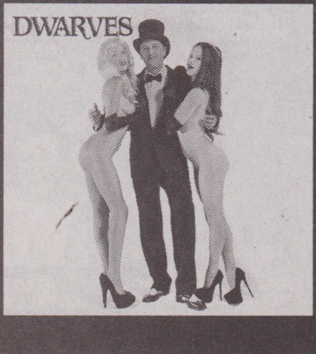

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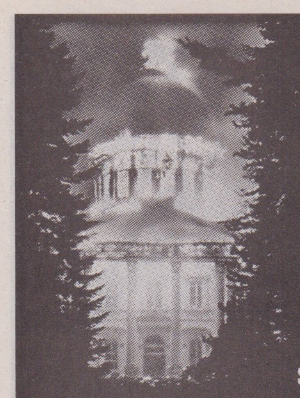

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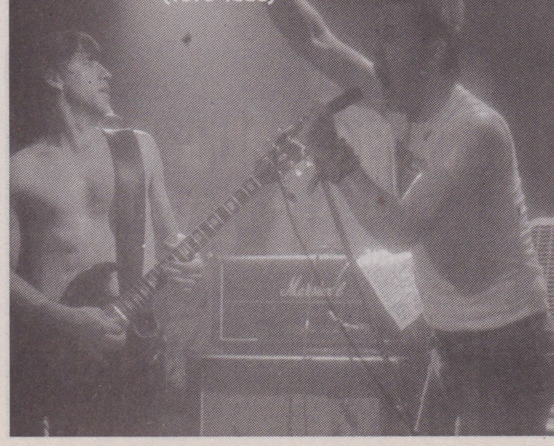

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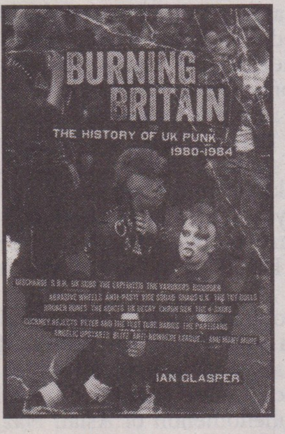


Burning Britain: The History of UK Punk 1980-1984
Ian Glasper
449 pages • $24.95
PM Press
pmpress.org

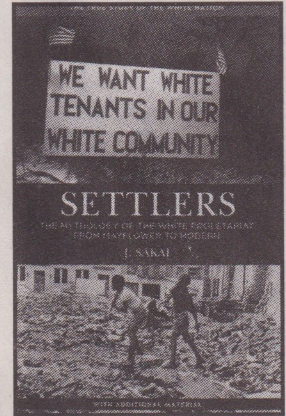
As you should know by now, Ian Glasper is the heavyweight champion of UK punk history. This time his attention focuses on the '80s UK hardcore movement. Originally published in the UK in 2004, this 2014 edition of *Burning Britain* allowed Glasper to expand its scope. It includes more in-depth info, extended interviews, and new sections on bands that were not highlighted before. He profiles nearly one hundred bands and five labels, allowing the movement to define itself through a collective voice.

The book explores the bands according to geographic location. It serves individual biographies well, providing great context for each band, a constant reminded that this was not a genre confined to the disaffected youth of urban Britain. Hardcore provided liberation and tribal camaraderie to kids all over, including rural and suburban areas of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.

Most importantly, Glasper faithfully and meticulously collects the narratives of those who formed this movement. And though the band members' perspectives may be tempered with time, each perspective rebuilds this world. We're not talking just a few interviews here and there. This is a master collection of participants retelling their own experiences and philosophies (if they had any).

Although we are roughly 35 years and 5,000 miles removed from the beginning of the UK hardcore movement, Glasper effectively bridges that gap with these lengthy interviews, loads of photos, and select discographies. This is a truly vital piece of work that does justice to the participants who made UK hardcore happen.

—Beryl St. Jeanne

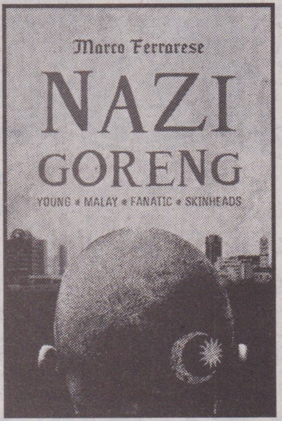


Settlers: A Mythology of the White Proletariat From Mayflower to Modern
J. Sakai
439 pages • $20.00
PM Press
pmpress.org

"No one is above the reality of history." That quote from this book basically sums up the tenor of J. Sakai's radical history of the working class in the United States of America. Sakai takes a hardline post-colonial Marxist approach in reading history to argue that there has never been a true white proletariat in the history of the US and that the white working class has always thrown any ethnic workers under the bus as soon it was possible to advance in class—which, given the examples in this book, seems to be pretty much exactly how things went. He shows examples of white, working class people reclaiming land given to African-American working class in New York, the attacks on Asian working class on the West Coast, and union party lines being written on the terms of race—basically a myriad examples in which race trumped class among the working poor. Sakai focuses on the concept of "settlerism," which is a concept that tries to separate racism as we know it today from its origins as a by-product of the settler-colonial societies that were created in order to further Western capitalism. This idea of settlerism, with its promise of "earned" land in a country founded on stolen land, shows how modern day racism is a product of capitalism, and how the myth of the American white working class has only gone to further settlerism as normative.

This book was originally published in 1983 and this is the fourth printing—its extra material includes an interview with the author and a speech the author gave concerning reparations given to Japanese-American internees. An unflinchingly biased history (not that the facts and information given are at suspect) that has the ability to both excite and incense the reader. My only qualm with the book is that occasionally there is some arbitrarily bolded text in a paragraph, which gives the feeling of reading someone's used, highlighted textbook. The information presented here is interesting and thought-provoking enough that bolding certain passages seems overkill and almost proselytizing. I'm not sure if this was an editorial decision, or the author's vision, but either way, it was somewhat distracting and completely unnecessary. Other than that, this book did what all good books of history should do: make the reader reconsider how we actually got to where we are now. Very recommended. If this country was a bit more honest with itself, we would see more people assigned this book for reading in high schools and on college campuses.

—Ray Suburbia



Nazi Goreng: Young Malay Fanatic Skinheads
Marco Ferrarese
304 pages • $17.00
Monsoon Books
monsoonbooks.com.sg

It all comes together in a derelict house in the jungle. Need I remind you that Malaysia boasts the world's oldest and densest jungle? No wonder that the principal players (skinheads, immigrants, gangsters and cops) converge in that often played-out orgasm that must come at the end of mainstream stories. Secrets are revealed, people die, dreams smashed. Maybe setting the denouement in the edge of the wilds is significant—to reveal the "animal like" nature of our present reality. *Nazi Goreng* opens with the main characters sitting behind a dumpster. And there you go, a perfect indicator of where its head is. Eventually, I figured out the best place to keep the book secure between reading sessions—in my garbage can. Just to keep it comfortable in the filth of its interiors.

Actually, there is much to be found looking past the surface of this work. It is a story of two young, small-town men taking on the world, aiming to rise above the slums of their environment. They have chosen the path of racist skinheads to assert their power. Their friendship is tenuous, almost crumbling as their quest for wealth improves. As a character study there is some craft involved—the major players skirt being two-dimensional most of the time and hint at being more complex. Malik is the instigator, the one convinced

of the righteousness of racial superiority. His native language is violence and he almost acts as a preschool teacher to his friend, Azril, the innocent. He becomes experienced before our eyes. As he learns to speak with his fists, he starts to question his path as it gets entangled with mafia drug smugglers, crooked cops, and low wage foreigners struggling out of the poverty. The story briefly switches focus onto characters other than the skinheads, even giving them some depth and a chance at subverting the narrative. The players don't effectively challenge the game, and ultimately end up as statistics.

If you're like me and don't have much desire to be in the head of such wasted youth, reading this book is a form of torture. The main characters are so awful that I began to think perhaps that this work was a subtle and sick joke. After every crime they commit I had a side of myself wishing some sort of "justice" befall them; even moments of cheering the police. But the anti-heroes escape harm every time. This book would seem to attract those who cherish crime, albeit not the kind worth caring about.

Aspects of it remind me of 20th century pulp novels, stories laden with an air of cheap thrills. Each chapter spotlights either violence, crime or sex—this alone makes for a night of page turning. The writing is grounded in dialogue—you hear what the characters say more than what the narrator has to say about it all. This approach makes it move like you're watching a movie. The dialogue is even reminiscent of a Tarantino film—if that's your thing.

An understated theme is the cycle of violence. The story is set into motion after a punk show, where young Azril is jumped walking home. It isn't long before he is accosting hapless strangers. Later the young Vietnamese immigrants terrorized by the Nazis gather arms for retribution. (As an aside, permit me to comment on the nature of this particular form of bigotry. The main characters are mad at foreigners, largely ones that are not Muslim. But I dare say Islam is not native, it is an import to Malaysia. Ah! the unexamined life... But then again how many white skinned people of European descent in the US are waving the flag as they target brown skinned people, indigenous people—calling them immigrants? Fucking tools!)

The book doesn't have a moralizing overtone. It simply shows fucked up people and lets the reader decide. I can see this book playing well with actual racists. Especially since the cover itself is adorn in bold black, white, and red colors, including the word "Nazi" in 28-point type above a shaven head. The numerous typos throughout probably strike at the education level of the losers who would cheer rampaging bigots. But that is a gut reaction. When I investigated this book more closely, I discovered that the author felt so outside from his native culture that he wrote this book in English—a second language for him. There are quite a few moments of clunky prose as a result, such as: "Porthaksh received Malik's verbal bullet and then reloaded his own vocal rifle with an effective clearing of his throat."

Reading *Nazi Goering* and taking it at face value, I succumbed to the loathsome players as they thrashed a way out of hopelessness. Thankfully I pushed myself to look deeper into where the author was coming from. For a while, my impression of this book was that the most interesting story to be found is in the author's bio. Marco is of the punk scene. Growing up in Italy and playing in bands, he eventually toured the global DIY scene and found himself in Southeast Asia. From there he hitchhiked through Asia to Europe. Recently he settled in Malaysia. If only he had written about those experiences instead. Oh wait, how many punk memoirs out there can make an exciting life seem flat? Better to reshape it all into fiction as is the case here.

The title *Nazi Goreng* is a pun on a popular food dish. This would normally fly over my head because I'm a little slow sometimes. My initial impression of this book wasn't so good, as you can see. But when I decided to dig past the surface, I found that the author is bright and enthusiastic. He saw the phenomenon of Asian Nazis skinheads and tried to crack their code. I am not all that won over by the story here, but I can appreciate most art that begs the audience to do a double take. This book is flawed and I predict it will be known as a readable early work from an author who will eventually be known for a dynamic and captivating story. By writing in English he may reach more people than his native tongue Italian, but he has some work to do to catch up in mastering this complex and insensible language. And apparently, we all have some work to do getting kids off the racial superiority trap.

—Robert Eggplant

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

For the past six years I have DJed a party for the Piedmont Avenue Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony in Oakland, CA. What started as something I was asked to do one year has become a tradition involving me purchasing Christmas records year round. I am not a collector of Christmas records. I don't scour the planet for the most obscure record I can find. I simply pick up ones that will be fun to play at the party. Director and Christmas music fan Mitchell Kezin has a similar attitude. His documentary **Jingle Bell Rocks!** looks at collectable Christmas records with more of an emphasis on the music and the people who made it.

Kezin began his interest in Christmas music with a song he heard as a child "The Little Boy That Christmas Forgot," sung by Nat King Cole. At first his parents weren't getting along. Then they separated. The song spoke to him even though his mother made the effort to make Christmas festive for her family. That song is the starting point for **Jingle Bell Rocks!** Kezin begins by discussing records with some collectors. He quickly and humbly realizes that he isn't as much of a collector as he suspected. That is to the viewer advantage. Listening to record collectors talk about obscure records on film gets old quick. Kezin takes some of the odder Christmas songs that he enjoys and goes further with them.

This is where **Jingle Bell Rocks!** shines. Kezin interviews musicians and lets them tell the interesting stories as to how they came about to record a Christmas song. Bob Dorough wrote "Blue Xmas (To Whom It May Concern)" when Miles Davis asked him. Dorough recalls how he would see Davis playing in New York and would always try to talk to him, but all that he could get out was "great show" or another tame compliment. However when Dorough ran into Davis in Los Angeles, Davis asked him to write a Christmas song. Dorough is a Bebop musician and wrote a cynical take on the holiday. He sings the vocal on the recording as well.

Another funny story is Joseph "Run" Simmons of Run-DMC. He recalls how his manager Bill Adler (who also appears in the film) called him up to suggest doing a song for an upcoming benefit album for the Special Olympics. Simmons was in the middle of eating breakfast, but got inspired and quickly wrote "Christmas In Hollis." Simmons laughs thinking back on it. He wrote a classic Christmas song before he finished his eggs.

There are interviews with many luminaries of the Christmas music world including John Waters who made a Christmas compilation a few years back, Clarence Carter who wrote the raunchy "Back Door Santa," Sandy Dedrick of the Free Design discussing their anti-war Christmas song written while her brother/ bandmate was in the army, and many more. There are so many stories surrounding the songs that **Jingle Bell Rocks!** easily gets away from the monotony of record collecting and into why someone would want to collect them in the first place. Kezin's maintains a childlike excitement about the whole process. He gives presents to each of his interviewees. He even manages to get the Mighty Sparrow to record a Calypso version of his favorite Christmas song "The Little Boy That Christmas Forgot" at the end of the film. (jinglebellrocks.vhx.tv)

Johnny Thunders may not be one of my favorite people. I like the New York Dolls, the Heartbreakers and some of his solo music. Yet, he just seems to be more emulated for his drug use and that is always a turn off for me. In fact one of the more humorous parts of **Looking For Johnny** is when his friend Marcia Resnick recalls calling him out for being a junkie. Thunders' reply was, "Keith Richards is a junkie." Resnick frustratedly points out that Richards got famous before he became a junkie. It just emphasizes the point. Is Thunders a great musician or an infamous junkie?

Looking For Johnny won't clear anything up. You probably already know the story. His bands were popular in New York and England, but they never got beyond a minor celebrity status. Drugs ruined almost all of the chances for success. **Looking For Johnny** makes a small attempt to portray his death in New Orleans as something more than an OD. According to his autopsy, Thunders had Leukemia and possibly AIDS. The people he was doing drugs with stole his guitars and other belongings when he died. While I will contend that stealing from someone who has just died in your presence is ethically wrong, these were junkies and that is the kind of thing they do.

There are many famous people interviewed in **Looking For Johnny**. They all say the same thing. Thunders was a great guy. He was a great guitar player. He was a great songwriter. He was charismatic. He overdid things. Of course there are also many people who are missing from the story including Thunders' family. While I believe what the people who knew Thunders have to say about him, none of these traits end up being expressed in the film. His music is poorly recorded and his interviews lack the charisma and good nature we are told he possessed. **Looking For Johnny** ends up portraying him as just another person in the scene. He was there and somehow he managed to influence people. (chipbakerfilms.com)

Seeing the words "a hardcore punk musical" on the cover of a DVD is sure to scare away even the hardest of us. Yet, I can't resist something that seems so wrong. **Sacrificial Youth** lives up to that description. It immediately gets me laughing in a "this is so absurd" way. It is absurd, but once you get past that initial shock it is also very enjoyable.

Sacrificial Youth is a small town punk band that plays shows at the Youth Center. The singer TJ is a straightedge idealist who believes in supporting the local scene and not selling out to corporations. Jud the bass player agrees to play a show opening for a major label punk band Hellbound Boy without TJ's knowledge. Hellbound Boy's hit song is a commercial jingle for Blüüd, an energy drink. As it turns out Satan is behind the band and he wants Sacrificial Youth next.

Sacrificial Youth is a musical in every sense. The major parts of the action are sung. Some of the songs are better than others, but there are some really funny ones—my personal favorite being "I Reject It," which is about being controlled by cell phones. When TJ is done singing it he looks over at his bandmates who are all checking their phones.

Although the ending of **Sacrificial Youth** is a bit of a letdown, overall the film is very entertaining. It pokes fun at everything I believe in with equal humor thrown at the things I don't. The DVD includes a zine with all the lyrics for the musical and a download of the soundtrack. (regressivefilms.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, ℅ Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. No guest list necessary. carolynkeddy.com

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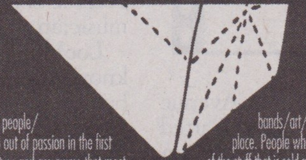

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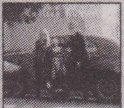

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1984 – "Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu" LP

Some folks may remember 1984's previous LP, *Why Not?* Released a couple years ago, it was a strong offering of Polish post-punk from the late '80s, but it didn't catch on as much as SIEKIERA, whose 1986 LP has been recently reissued and widely celebrated as a post-punk staple. *Why Not?* was much rawer and more urgent, while this LP is dramatic and theatrical. The drums are electronic and pulsing, the vocals are bold, and the overall feel is much more industrial. The huge production sounds very intentional, as is confirmed in the interview included in the layout. I've never paid any attention to SWANS, but apparently 1984 was heavily influenced by them at this point. This album was recorded in 1988 but the original tapes were lost. It was eventually released on CD ten years later and this is a first time vinyl release. *Specjalny Rodzaj Kontrastu* will appeal to folks with an interest in electronic and industrial music—typically not me, but I did enjoy it overall. (MA)
(Pasażer)

7YEARSBADLUCK – "Bridges" CD

This is a good pop punk band from Austria, with vocals in English. These guys dish out the well-crafted, well-produced stuff à la BLINK, the TRAVOLTAS, and maybe a dash of TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET—sixteen solid tracks without a dud in the bunch. Easily some of the best new pop punk I've heard this year, this trio stands out in a crowded genre. (RL)
(Monster Zero)

ADELIT@S / KOHOSH – split LP

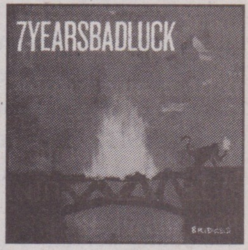
This strikes me more (and more immediately) than previous ADELIT@S releases. Layers of vocals from three different singers are the first thing that distinguishes the band and when you dig deeper you find songs that are catchy as anything without sacrificing any urgency. On the flip, KOHOSH play moody, anthemic anarcho-crust driven by a cello and male/female vocals. They are at their best when they slow down and let the mood take over, though the *(perhaps accidental?)* power metal leanings on the faster parts are intriguing. Both bands rely heavily on meaning and message, a welcome change from the wave of nihilism that is hopefully cresting soon. (WN)
(Aborted Society)

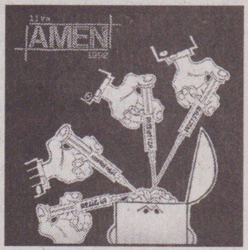
AGATHA – "Gravis Atque Gravior" LP

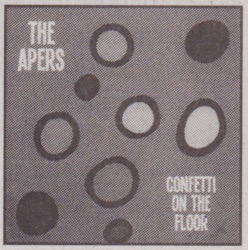
Very cool shreds from Milan's long-running metal warriors, a straight-ahead if undeniably stony take on left-field sludge. *This* AGATHA—not to be confused with Seattle's like-named queercore outfit, though both would fit perfectly on a bill with RAGANA—mines a surprisingly melodic sound out of bass and drums, with a noise-rock lurch that keep things flowing throughout. At times I swear there's a guitar snuck into the mix, though it could just be pedals, and I was excited to realize that Stefania from underrated cult heroes OVO joins in for a few songs. Vocals are low, sparse and commanding, with a perfect touch of psych and grunge, and the artful, exacting lyrics and explanations only deepen the impact of these powerful dirges. (WB)
(Chaos Rurale)

ALIANS – "Gavroche" LP

Named after the street urchin child of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables, Gavroche* was a cassette-only LP originally released in 1994 by ALIANS (Alliance), a prolific Polish band from the early '90s which blended classic, upbeat mid-tempos of Polish hardcore punk with rhythmic doses of reggae and ska and additional folksy instrumentation on accordion, congas, flute and keyboards. A clas-







sic recording of this then trendy style, the experimental and adaptive edge of both the musicianship here and Polish punk itself steers it away from the train wreck suggested on paper, as robotic staccato vocals dart between rushing 1-2 charges of straightforward hardcore, before breaking into a passage of dub or the accordion player jumps into the fray. There's something that always seems incredibly inauthentic and uh, "highlander" when bands from the US try this kind of folksy avant-garde punk but it's hard to find deep fault with a band from Poland, where punk seems both to be more flexible in its expression and be a broader extension of deep roots in a long lineage of community. Reaching for instruments of the past doesn't seem that out of line (there's even a flute and dub riffing off of the CLASH's "Guns of Brixton"). I don't always find the additional instrumentation completely seamless—in fact, it is occasionally tentative and stumbling—but this record still remains a challenging and interesting listen 20 years after its initial release, and is recommended for the open-minded who've ticked off their APATIA, ARMIA, and POST REGIMENT boxes, as the chassis of this still rests on similar, solid, classic songwriting. Anthemic punk with lyrics entirely in Polish with no translation, the entire original cassette release in encompassed in this first-time-on-vinyl reissue, along with a few of the additional tracks from its '90s and '00s subsequent reissues on CD and extended cassette. (KS)
(Pasazer / THC / Underground Factory)

AMEN – "Live 1992" EP

Not the roughly cotemporaneous Finnish band, this is the Polish AMEN who had a 1995 EP on Nikt Nic Nie Wie. A few years before that, this was recorded at a show they did with HOMOMILITIA. I wasn't familiar with the band, but this recording is livelier, rawer, and more to my liking than the studio EP. The guitar sound is from a dank dungeon, the drummer is raging but not totally tight, the shouted vocals are pissed, and they pretty much tear through the five songs. Lyrics are in Polish, with English translations. "Choroby Dziedziczne" ["Incurable Diseases"] says, "God! Honour! Motherland! Salvation!…Inheritable diseases are incurable." I don't know how often I'd play this at my house, but it's a good EP, and fans of more direct Polish hardcore will want to hear it. (JM)
(Pasażer)

AMERICAN HATE – "Dead Squeeze" EP

Yeah, yeah, yeah, we all know there's something in the water in the Midwest of these United States right now. Oklahoma City's AMERICAN HATE weren't on my radar before, but they can hang with the best of them—off-kilter MECHT MENSCHian riffs coupled with a singer who sounds like he's on the verge of expiration with every passing (and audible) breath. Words turn to groans, full body emissions. Can this dude make it through a live show? I don't know but I wanna find out. An otherwise excellent record is put over the top by the cover of DEVO's "Mr. DNA" that closes out the B-side. It's never a good thing when a band's best song is a cover *except* when they turn it so completely inside out that you forget what the original even sounds like. Can't wait to hear what happens next. (GA)
(Not Normal)

ANFO – 12"

Pretty cruddy street punk-y/shouty rock dudes from Greece with members of MY TURN and NO MIND. The first song sounded like decent, driving, mid-tempo punk, yet the rest of this EP is a craptastic mix of *How We Rock*-era SSD, (early) DROPKICK MURPHYS, and STREET DOGS. Mid-speed, bar punk anthems that go nowhere. However, their hearts are in the right place lyrically with a focus on class war, being anti-trendbot (or whatever "hipsters" are called now), and the negative effects of excess drinking. (JD)
(B-Other Side / Scarecrow, no info)

APATHETICS / COLD INSTITUTION – split EP

Starting with COLD INSTITUION, the band sounds like it consists of two bass players and drums, playing dark, stark post-punk with bleak, unaffected vocals. Their first song, "Spoiled Children" is spirited and shambolic in the best way, constantly on the verge of falling apart. "The Course" is a slower, moodier song that reminds me of NIRVANA…sort of in that pre-grunge way, before that scene blew up. APATHETICS remind me of BURNING KITCHEN with a more goth or ARCTIC FLOWERS influence. Actually, that's *exactly* what they sound like to me. It's really good, but lacks a little bit of originality…like a lot of punk bands. Still, good. (GH)
(Bad Hair Life)

THE APERS – "Confetti on the Floor" CD

Apparently pop punk is fairly universal. Or rather, it reached the fair shores of the Netherlands' industrial port of Rotterdam eighteen or so years ago, and the APERS have never looked back. Though took 'em a while to play it forward enough to record this, their sixth full-length. They take the SCREECHING WEASEL/QUEERS playbook, and pretty much stick to it closely. Lots of melody, and harmony, with the snot, and an excellent version of "Eve of Destruction". Thirteen tracks, twenty-eight minutes of ear candy. (RK)
(Monster Zero)

THE APOSTLES – "Punk Obituary" LP

This is the first legit reissue of this gem since CONFLICT released it in 1986. Kinda fantastic experimental, anarchist peace punk with awkward vocals which are almost spoken instead of sung at times, alongside occasional bursts of melody. They could seriously give Doc Dart a run for his money in the "weird as hell, but I totally love these vocals" contest. From their era, location, and political stance, there are going to be a lot of people who mention CRASS when they talk about this record, but these guys are *also* influenced by a lot of Irish ballads, folk, sea shanties, and straight up rock, even though they don't seem very...polished, let's say. This is a really beautiful release: gatefold sleeve covered in anarcho-punk comics inside and out, accompanied by a giant, double-sided, intense-as-hell zine that kind of blew my mind. Embarrassingly, this landed square in the middle of my "How have I not heard this?" pile. For fans of A.P.P.L.E., ANIMALS AND MEN, RONDOS, and any early queercore. Good luck finding this as there were only 500 made. Fuuuuuck, I want this so bad! (DZ)
(Beat Generation, no info)

AUTARKEIA / ME AND GOLIATH – split LP

This international split 12" is a solid display of why vinyl won't ever die. Split 12"s Rule and the same effect just can't be achieved on CD. Florida's AUTARKEIA has an aggressive, more hardcore leaning screamo sound with great noodly leads over heavy dissonance and harsh spitting vocals, a cross between Southern screamo and Mid-Atlantic post-hardcore fury. The ME AND GOLIATH side is a bit more of a classic screamo screamo approach of really soothing and warm soft melodies erupting into pulverizing melodic heaviness. The vocals are screamed with the whole body and the composition as a whole is felt with the whole body. The packaging matches the excellence with a unique cover with slits cut, and a photograph inserted in the slots, and two inserts, one to each bands design. A+ all the way through. (DV)
(City 17 / IFB / React With Protest)

BAD ADVICE – "You Suck" CD

Three tracks of super tight melodic hardcore, à la NOFX. Indeed, these could be outtakes from *White Trash*... Yup, they're that good (or bad, I suppose, depending on one's penchant for NOFX's finest era), save the lyrics are just pretty dumb, in that singing about my girlfriend's a wrestler, or an alien, type of dumb. But no argument from me regarding the sounds. Spot on. (RK)
(self-released)

BARRERACUDAS – "Promises, Promises/ Young & Dumb"

While this may sound like a slag to some of our toughies-only readership, I absolutely love the way Atlanta's BARRERACUDAS riff on the big sound of those '79-'83 Passport or Portrait label mop-top fuck-o power pop LPs. They're the modern-day representation of why guys like me wind up "accidentally" owning four copies of a HEADBOYS album. Anyway, shit's slick and gets me goin' way more than most waving this flag nowadays. Impossible to shake either tune after repeated listens, which is really the point, ain't it? Kinda sleazy, mostly lovely, entirely worthy of your attention. (MC)
(Oops Baby)

BASIC SKILLS REVIEW – "Activate" EP

Positive hardcore is still alive and well, it seems, and this record is evidence of it. I hear *Bonds of Friendship*-era INSTED all over this EP, but really, it could also be 7 SECONDS' *The Crew*. The first track "Activate" touches on aspects of mobilizing and being a part of a movement. It really doesn't go into too much depth about anything but crescendos with "*Never be denied/One heart and one mind/ Never be denied/One goal, soul to soul.*" The lyrics are personal without going into detail and I feel like they're trying to teach me something. That's chill. Preach. "High Road" is the high point on this record. It's a song about, you guessed it, taking the high road. Being the better person. No joke. That's a valid message. The lyrics allude to struggling with inner demons and the duality of acting out the rage you may have. And, all of these messages are tucked in a very IGNITE delivery. This record resonates in the larger hardcore canon because it doesn't really stray too far from the foundation that was laid 30 years ago. Anyone can form a band and speak their mind without really reinventing anything. Sometimes creativity isn't the key. Pretty beautiful, right? For fans of: Speeches in between songs and bands, bringing your kids to a show, pumpkin spice lattes. (MW)
(Undercurrent)

THE BAT BITES – CD

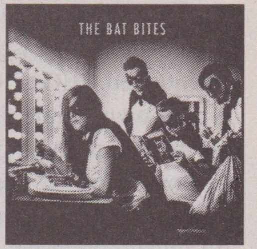
Pretty polished pop punk from Rotterdam—I think these folks must have spent at least three months straight holed up in a bunker listening to SUPERCHUNK, anything on Fat, and BANANARAMA. The artwork depicts the band as masked, caped villains who apparently robbed a bank and kidnapped the RAMONES. (Or, rather, some RAMONES impersonators?) The amount of sugar sprinkled in this CD is a little intense at times. A few rockin' pop punk gems for sure, but more often than not, I'm hearing the Fat formula and the vocals remind me of that "Hey now, you're a rock star" song. (DZ)
(Monster Zero)

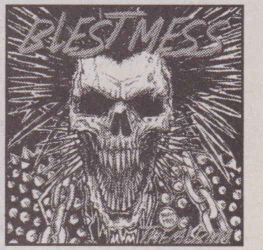
BATON ROUGE – "Totem" LP

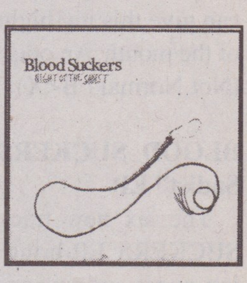
Dark, droning, thickly layered, and kinda rockin' emo...in French! I was kinda on the fence with this one, but I think they won me over eventually. I really can't stand emo, or melodic post-hardcore, or whatever the hell that stuff is called, but this is so dark and intense that I kinda dig it. At times it gets a little trippy, electronic, and experimental, and I think I like it. This is some primal, repetitive, doomy, stoner emo. I didn't think it would be my cup of tea, but these French mofos have twisted something I couldn't care less for into something I can get behind. Well done, folks. (DZ)
(Adagio830 / Bakery Outlet / Pure Pain Sugar)

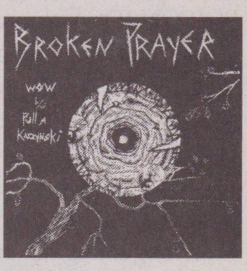
BIG CRUX – "Ponchito" LP

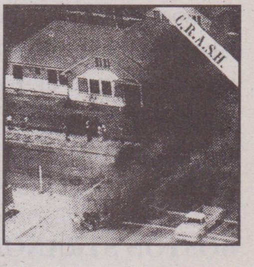
I'm just gonna go ahead and say this first: BIG CRUX sounds like the BIG BOYS and MINUTEMEN...like a more hyper *Three Way Tie For Last*. Now that that's out of the way, let's get on with this.

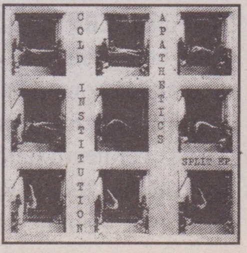












This LP is fucking awesome. While they do take some major cues from the bands I mentioned, BIG CRUX holds it down on their own. While they look to the past, they're also pushing out on the constricting boundaries of punk and hardcore in a way that is so desperately needed (but still remaining in the confines of a male-bodied band). Every member of this band is going off in every song and it proves what a well-oiled, tight machine they are. It's that kind of tight musicianship that was prevalent on early SST releases that made you want to pick up an instrument and start your own band. There're flashes of funk, jazz, "Latin twang," and hardcore throughout, but it's all funneled through a punk mentality. I can't really sit here and tell you exactly what this sounds like, but I can give this my highest recommendation of the month. An outstanding LP! (GH)
(Not Normal / B<X)

BLOOD SUCKERS – "Night of the Sadist" EP

The six new tracks on this BLOOD SUCKERS EP bring to mind the seething angst and swagger that poured from every SEX VID song, the licks that made POISON IDEA records mandatory repeat listens, and the intensity of throwing a brick. This Finnish group is making some serious noise with their second release, a complex rager that is every bit as good as any record this year. The song sequencing is perfect—I was captivated by each track from beginning to end. The accusatory language, warm tones and full throttle approach makes this release beyond good. Comparisons fail, but hardcore purists take note, there is a new record to throw in with the pile of WARTHOG, FIX MY HEAD, TOTAL ABUSE, and NO STATIK discs. (RM)
(Hardware)

BOSTON STRANGLER – "Fire" LP

Right out of the gate, *Fire* just feels like a more mature BOSTON STRANGLER. The difference seems to be that where *Primitive* was more of a genre exercise or homage to their Boston hardcore forefathers—albeit the best example I have ever heard (and a *perfect* record)—*Fire* shows "the STRANGLAH 'finding' their own sound." Still present are the noticeably-Boston steamrolling riffs but more "punk" influence has stepped up its role, mostly in the form of bass hooks and vocal melodies, and guitar leads, which are most obvious on tracks like, "Forward into Hell," "Broken Spirit," and the outro of "Slow Burn." I can't tell you how many times a day those choruses or leads pop into my head. The difference is definitely subtle, because this is very obviously the same frustration-spitting cobra backed by a sonic wrecking crew armed with the power of a major metropolitan DPW crew laying down the best cold-weather hardcore *on the planet*, making you feel just as bad about yourself as you do about the trash around you with just as much misplaced youthful anger as real world adult problems staring you in the face. In my eyes, *Fire* is BOSTON STRANGLER's best effort and a more singular record. Fantastic. (JU)
(self-released)

BROKEN PRAYER – "Wow/Pull A Kaczynski"

You know how back in the day, sometimes your dad would get stoned and tell you about what it was like being a teenager in the '70s? Dope, El Caminos, the valley, etc…Eventually he'd start nodding off, but not before telling you about how *Dark Side of the Moon* lined up perfectly with *The Wizard of Oz*. And you were always like, "Whatever old man. I'm just gonna listen to BLACK FLAG in my room." I feel like you could spin this record to *The Toxic Avenger* and it would line up to that scene where the jocks beat up the little wimpy kid (soon to be the avenger) and the dialogue would sync up with the vocalist on this 7". This is straight mole-man music. If you think that's a dis, by the way, you're a fuckin' moron. This record seamlessly mixes a Dangerhouse vibe, à la *I Slept In An Arcade*, with *Cacophany*-era RUDIMENTARY PENI. It's loose but at the same time provides a sonic punch. It grooves, man. It grooves hard. There's only one riff on the A-Side track "Wow" and it doesn't let up. You feel all freaky and dirty after listening to that shit. The vocalist talk yells over the tracks, which totally reminds me of Bruce Loose of FLIPPER fame. Totally worth a spin. I did some digging on the World Wide Web and apparently they have a LP coming out? I really wanna hear it. Good Record. Totally worth it. Much love. For fans of: Bahn Mi, Coke in a can (not a bottle), Danny DeVito in *The Van*. (MW)
(Not Normal)

BROKEN THINGS – CD

These guys sound very '90s to me—that era when bands were a mix of punk and indie rock. I used to love this genre back then. SUPERCHUNK, SUGAR, or even JETS TO BRAZIL come to mind, and while this certainly isn't on those bands' level, it is decent. The vocals could be less flat for my tastes, but still a band that has a good musical feel on these four songs. (RL)
(self-released)

THE CHARLEY FEW – LP

From Hostile City, home of the Mutter Museum, Rocky Balboa, and the Pagans MC comes this upbeat Oi!/punk band. Sometimes I can feel when a band is totally genuine even if it's not quite my thing. The songs are good and upbeat and the vocals are full of heart. I love "Fist Fight Tonight!" and "Ramones Beach" is a great cover of "Rockaway Beach" with the chorus changed to East/West/South Philly. My only complaint is the funky RANCID/PENNYWISE style bass. Actually, I have no idea what PENNYWISE sounds like but you get the idea. A small complaint to these mates. Rock on. (RO)
(This Fucking City)

THE CHEMICALS – "Out of My Mind/Run And Hide"

Pure pop from Canada 1985, spiffily reissued by the newly founded excavation imprint, Meanbean. These CHEMICALS weren't on my radar at all prior to this reissue, but I'm pleasantly surprised by the quality of both tracks. "Out of My Mind" could've easily found a home on Voxx or Bomp Records, alongside other countless near-legend '60s-lean power poppers. An obvious shoulda-woulda-coulda hit. The wave-heavy but punk-lite flip, "Run And Hide," is quirkier and more indicative of the pro sheen so many of the records from this time period have. Not a bad tune by any means, but the sort of thing I can only

handle in small doses. In any event, power pop dorks will no doubt find value in this handsomely assembled, sonically sweet 45. (MC)
(Meanbean)

CONTRASTO / KALASHNIKOV – split 10"

This record is packaging-heavy, with a gatefold jacket, eight-page booklet, and two other inserts. The first CONTRASTO song is a mellow instrumental piece with a sample laid overtop, after which we get three tracks of catchy hardcore in Italian. All these songs have rad gang vocals, but the faster ones especially kill it, wild and almost out of hand, with the bass a counterpoint to the vocals. I can play "Politica e Rivoluzione" over and over. Flip it over, change the setting to 45 rpm, and KALASHNIKOV give us an intro, a spoken word piece (again, in Italian), and one sweet, tight metal/hardcore jam, reminiscent of ASSASSINATORS, featuring melodic female vocals and even a well-executed keyboard lead. Translations into English are provided for both bands. For today's radical (in the political sense) Italian hardcore fans, DIY as fuck, get this however you can—they advise "play, copy, share." (JM)
(Anfibio / Black Fire / Calimocho Autoproduzioni / Chaos Rurale / Cose Turche / Deathcrush / El Paso / Equal Rights / Forever True / Fra il di' e il fa' autoproduzioni / MVDS / NKTN / Obdura / Still Breathing / Tifiamo Rovolta)

C.R.A.S.H. – "Barely Alive" EP

This band contains ex-members of blah blah blah, which is only relevant in that they know how to write killer, snotty and spiteful yet intelligent punk that, at times, veers into hardcore and dirge territories. I felt like their first record was great snotty punk in a Dischord meets Kill Rock Stars kinda way, but this one definitely has an early LA punk feel, without sounding like (or trying to sound like) any particular band or sound. It's in no way retro—the sound here is timeless and reeks of desperation and knowing that there's no future or way out. Both sides of the record stop on a dime, and that's how it is. (DG)
(Ooga Booga)

CRAYON – "Brick Factory" LP

Twenty years after its original release, Happy Happy Birthday To Me Records has reissued this album on vinyl for the first time. If you've heard of this band, you probably love them. But for the uninitiated out there, ask yourself this: do you cringe at the word "twee"? No? Okay, please continue reading. This is the album of your dreams if you wished the PASTELS incorporated a little more grunge into their sound. It's total bedroom indie pop, but a bit more fuzzed-out and distorted than you might expect. Not abrasive by any means—the whole album gives you that floating-on-a-cloud feeling. It's cool, definitely a record well worth a re-release. (FS)
(Happy Happy Birthday To Me)

CROSS – "Pyre/Repetition"

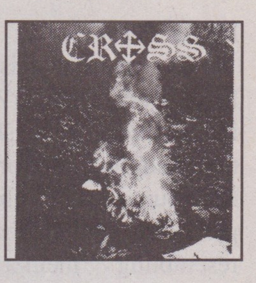
Four simple words should be enough to interest some of you in this little nugget: "former members of MASSHYSTERI." If that band was the perfect distillation of punk and pop in the 21st century, CROSS is its drug-addled stepchild, and it's a ton of fun to hear these familiar voices go down the LSD spiral. Stomping beats and retro noir guitar sounds recall the dark, seedy fringes of rockabilly and '60s freakbeat, with an almost jazzy feel that wouldn't be out of place on a David Lynch soundtrack. The happy-sounding "Repetition" doesn't quite live up to the burned-out brilliance of the A-side, but everyone who was bowled over by RAKTA's psych/post-punk experiments will want to turn on, drop out, and tune in to CROSS. (WB)
(Deranged)

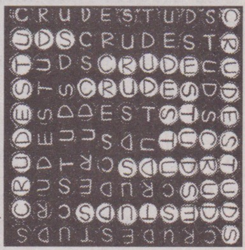
CRUDE STUDS – "Night Bathe" EP

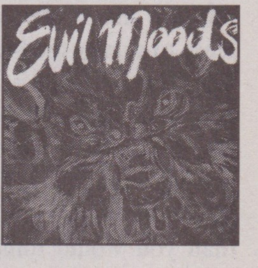
Some times you hear someone asking, "What's the perfect punk record?" as if only one exists. In my opinion, there are hundreds (if not thousands) of *perfect* punk records. It feels like at least one comes into *MRR* each month. CRUDE STUDS has given us yet another to add to that list. An unbridled chaotic onslaught of punk mayhem, distilled into five short and snotty raggers. It's exactly the kind of music you want to listen to when you are punching mirrors, breaking fluorescent light bulbs in an alley, vomiting at a show, or doing whatever else you goons do on a regular night. Find this record and live the chaos! (FS)
(Phono Select)

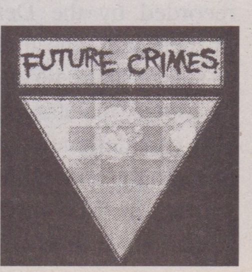
DAGRS – CD

I guess it's a trend now to leave vowels out of your band name, but it looks like DAGRS forgot one. If you're going to name your band after a dagger and use daggers and knives in your artwork then they shouldn't be the most boring and rudimentary outline of daggers and knives possible. DAGRS play a sort of punk'n'roll style similar to the BRONX. There are a lot of guitar hooks and drum parts, where the vocalist probably tells the crowd to clap along. This isn't bad, but you're probably better off listening to the BRONX. (KC)
(Soul (Sic))









DEAF WISH – LP

Long overdue reissue of the first release from DEAF WISH. The recording captures some shambolic, over-the-top fledgling performances from this Melbourne group who manage to wrangle noise and feedback into something resembling memorable songwriting. Imagine a concoction of SONIC YOUTH, SUPERCHUNK, and PAVEMENT (all of whom to a certain extent incorporated influences of the Dunedin sound) filtered through a distinctive Antipodean lens in the orbit of UV RACE and EDDY CURRENT SUPRESSION RING. This was originally released as a CD-R demo and saw a vinyl issue in 2011 that quickly went out of print; now's your chance to grab a copy. Catch them live too if you get a chance. (AM)
(Homeless)

DESTROY ALL MONSTERS – "Hot Box 1974-1994" 3xLP

Welcome to *Maximum Anti-Rocknroll*. If you're not familiar with Ann Arbor/Detroit's DESTROY ALL MONSTERS, time to change that! Centered around the alluring Niagara, the band cycled through two main phases: more experimental beginnings featuring Mike Kelley, Jim Shaw, and Cary Loren (who would all go on to have successful careers in contemporary art) and the rock'n'rolling demonstrated on their studio records, bolstered by the band's addition of the STOOGES' Ron Asheton and MC5's Michael Davis. In the past two decades, there have been several CD-only explorations of the band's output, but this boxset is the first vinyl release to survey the breadth of their career. The first LP looks at the artier tracks recorded in the early '70s alongside a selection of some produced after the original line-up's reunion in the mid '90s as well as live recordings of the reunion (better than you would think!). The second offers a selection from their studio singles, recorded by the Detroit rocker version of the band—the inclusion of the double A-sided "Bored/You're Gonna Die" is, of course, the stand-out. (Diligent punks, you can definitely find cheap copies of this single and all others on your next trip to the Midwest! Mandatory soundtrack for all disenchanted mutants.) The live disc, taken from two performances in early 1983 is a highlight. The collection comes with a beautifully printed booklet that gathers much previously unpublished art and documentation of the group. My only gripe is no words! I wanna read some genius musings on these punkers. For that, pick up a copy of *Return of the Repressed*, published a few years back. The group has undergone several iterations of excavation and rediscovery and this offering from Munster is as good an introduction as any. (GA)
(Munster)

DESTRUYE Y HUYE – "Oscura Sociedad" EP

I loved this band's demo so I was psyched to see this 45 in the review pile. Hits somewhere between FERTIL MISERIA and the NURSE! Tough and vicious—the totally sick blown-out guitars, commandeering vocals, and rumbling, threatening rhythm section all conspire to sound like they're gonna fall apart…But really they know exactly what they are doing and it's a savage punk attack destined to mutate minds everywhere. The lyrics are dark and reflect an alienated existence, a GREG SAGE meets ESKORBUTO reality. The music is crude and primitive; it all reflects the existential reality of modern life. Angee's vocals are so raging and cool, so charismatic, they totally take it over the top. I hope these women tour the west coast, ASAP! The insert has a cool almost poster quality to it, really iconic and classic punk looking. (LG)
(Verdugo Discos)

DEZERTER – "Ile Procent Duszy?" LP

If you've been in or around punk long enough, you surely know or have at least heard of DEZERTER. If you don't, well time to learn, because this Polish stalwart band is a great example of punk survival. They've been around for decades, through censorships, communist regimes and twelve full-length records, and they've inspired many a punk both inside Poland and out. They've had different eras in their own sound, without losing, however, what makes them distinctly DEZERTER: a structured mix of metallic hardcore, laced with punk, weirder new wave, post-punk, and even dub details. This amalgamation is accompanied by choppy, brazen guitars, mechanical, almost electronic-sounding drum beats (that classic Polish beat found in bands such as POST REGIMENT, MOSKWA and SIEKIERA—*love it!*), the vocalist's characteristic nasally sneer/growl, and memorable hooks and riffs. This is a DEZERTER classic really, at least for their '90s era, and it's seeing the reissue treatment for a second time, the first being in 2009. This 20th anniversary edition comes with new cover artwork, and a glossy finish for both jacket and insert. You could skip this if you already know what DEZERTER material you like, but if you want to familiarize yourself with their sound, this LP does a pretty good job of encompassing a lot of it. (LA)
(Pasażer)

DEZERTER – "Wiekszy Zjada Mniejszego" LP

It is sincerely intimidating to interact with new work from a band with the kind of historical importance and legacy that DEZERTER has. Especially when they've done some, um…less than stellar work in the more recent past. Fortunately, their fourteenth (!) album is a really solid piece of work, all historical context aside. There's still a fair bit of genre-hopping experimentation going on, but the punk backbone is much more present than it has been in the past. Indeed, some of these songs are so straightforward and pissed off that they border on hardcore, especially the title track and the album-opening "Rzad Swiatowy." The crunchy reggae-syncopated "Hodowla Glupkow" recalls the best work of CITIZEN FISH, the downtempo "Na Bruk" channels FUGAZI at their bleakest, and "Wrog" has such a classic Polish punk sound it could pass for an outtake from the *Jak Punk to Punk* compilation (save for the high-quality production). Even the banjo and ukulele crooner ("Scieki") that closes the album conceals a wicked barb revealed once you read the lyrics. Speaking of which, it should really go without saying at this point but, of course, the lyrics are brilliant even in translation, savage and witty observations on issues of class and power that will resonate far beyond their native Poland. This is a fucking phenom-

enal return to form from a band that's been around for 30-plus years. (AU)
(Pasażer)

DISORDER – "Fires Light the Sky" LP

No, not that DISORDER. This DISORDER (yes, also British) was from Sunderland not Bristol. This LP collects their two singles, a compilation track, and three rehearsal recordings from 1979. Altogether, it's pretty good '77 style punk, with the singles recorded in '80 and '81; poppy and catchy enough. Frankly this style was always hit or miss for me, often too mid-tempo rock'n'roll to be "punk" to my ears. This will be right up plenty of people's alleys, but there's still only one DISORDER in my book. "1984" is a decent enough track though, I'll admit. (SZ)
(Thought Crime)

DREAMSALON – "Soft Stab" LP

This almost sounds like a compilation LP. The title track is killer and sounds like an outtake from a band who woulda played with the EMBARASSMENT or the ENDTABLES, spare, propulsive post-WIRE art mania for damaged minds. I was thrown off by the tracks that reminded me of a weird combination of '90s Dischord and Touch and Go records, almost FUGAZI/FIREHOSE levels of funk/dub-punk damage. Then other parts remind me of RISD early '00s warehouse noise mosh! PINK AND BROWN! And garage, too! The songs that work for my set of ears have a RED KRAYOLA/PERE UBU mutation apparent; more deconstructed spacey de-rockist effects. The lyrics are really smart and funny and my advice would to listen to the whole record before voting either way on this band—so many ideas contained within. Features humans from the INTELLIGENCE/A FRAMES and it shows! Investigate! (LG)
(Dragnet / Sweet Rot)

DYSTOPIA – "Human=Garbage" 2xLP

Holy shit! *Human=Garbage* is one of my favorite albums! There was a period in my life when my buddies and I would crank this on the boom box while we burned one, every damn day! We were kind of a gloomy bunch. DYSTOPIA were the mid to late '90s' crusty purveyors of agony and despair. *Human=Garbage* is a maddening heavy metal nightmare! Recorded three hours after they sprung their bass player from jail, DYSTOPIA laid down massive, doomed riffage driven forward by enraged, insistent and precise drumming. Dreary basslines back horrifying samples and effect-heavy guitars sound like what you might hear as you slowly die. This 20-year anniversary reissue includes bonus tracks from previous split releases, which were included on the original CD but not on the vinyl version and these are a little more grindcore but still grim as the reaper. They include the original singer Dan Kaufman. On clear vinyl and comes with stickers, too! (BA)
(Tankcrimes)

DOCTOR AND THE CRIPPENS – "Raphanadosis" CD

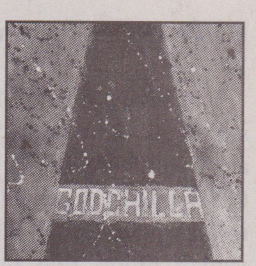
The good Dr. and his mates were a classic UK hardcore effort from the late '80s. Hardcore as in blistering thrash. Really fast, fuelled by Dave Ellesmere (he of early DISCHARGE fame) on drums. Think STUPIDS, crossed with DISORDER, and you get the idea. Actually, read the excellent liner notes from various band members, and Shane from Manic Ears (their label honcho), and you'll get a very good idea. Well, that and playing the bugger, too. It includes the full-length after which this CD is named, a John Peel session (their second), the *Avant Gardening* 12" EP and their tracks from the *North Atlantic Noise Attack* compilation. Twenty-five years later, this sounds considerably better than what I remember back in the day. Can't argue with that. (RK)
(Boss Tuneage)

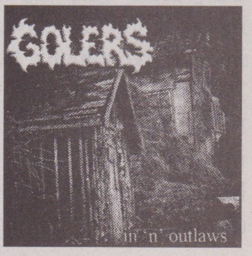
THE DOMESTICS – "Routine and Ritual" CD

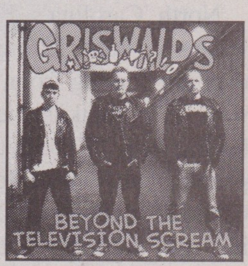
After a somber thirty-second intro, the DOMESTICS do not let up for the entirety of their album. Every song is pummeling, to the point, fierce and full of fucking energy. Seriously, if you're gonna play hardcore in this day and age, don't fuck around. The DOMESTICS got the memo. With song titles like "Get Fucked," "Fuck Your War," "Pills," and "A Pox On This Life," you probably have a good idea of what you're getting yourself into. The presentation is your basic style of '80s US hardcore, but it's done well and is pissed beyond belief. Only one song lasts longer than two minutes. Stellar. "Life Stinks, We're Fucked!!" (GH)
(TNS)

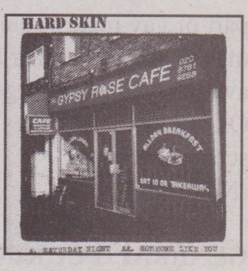
FACE THE RAIL – "Learning To Die" LP

I've seen these Frisco skatecore heavies play a bunch of times around town and this is their second LP, but I confess this is my first time listening to 'em on vinyl for some reason. I'm falling behind at keeping up with all the rad music coming out of this area, I guess. Sorry, boys. Anyway, let's make up for lost time: Nine energetic, mostly high-paced tracks of non-wussy melodic hardcore. The DC-sounding lead guitar is front and center in the mix, which is a nice touch and it is really what makes them stand out. Thoughtful, introspective lyrics round out the package. Great stuff. I promise to be more on it from now on. (AM)
(Katorga Works)









FORWARD – "Against Their Insanity" 12"

I'm blown away that FORWARD can still crank out records that give me chills, and I won't argue with anyone who claims this is their best record to date. The guitar is fukkn *screaming* throughout, and Akiyama's drums ride an indescribable line between D-beat and Japanese HC. As a unit, these four are unstoppable, packing an entire career's worth of intensity into six venomous burners. Along with 2012's *War Nuke And Death Sentence* on Prank, FORWARD is not merely cementing their legacy, they are still writing it. Mandatory. (WN)
(540)

FUTURE CRIMES – "Growlr" EP

North Carolina's FUTURE CRIMES wastes no time letting you know where they are coming from. The record begins with who I think is one of the band members saying, "I'm about to make straight people really uncomfortable." FUTURE CRIMES delivers some late '80s sounding raw hardcore with vocals that you can sing along to all day. For me the vocals are what really stand out—the tone, gravely, gruff bark, and that the point is to understand every word. We have a track about Growlr, a track about a guy who goes to pick up guys at bookstores ("Bookstore Whore"), "Whiskey Dick," meeting someone at a bar you want to take home ("Spend the Night With You") and by far my favorite track, "The Adonis Factor" which questions the ripped, chiseled, image which is idolized by a big part of gay male culture. This track alone makes this 7" worth a listen. They do step away from the message on "Romney Riot Oh '12" which tackles apathy in the punk scene. (MH)
(No Profit)

GENERAL FUCKING PRINCIPLE / SCHEISSE MINNELLI – split

GFP features known guitar genius Greg Hetson from CIRCLE JERKS etc. and Crazy Tom from DFL, a '90s LA HC band who were on the BEASTIE BOYS label—they had a song about delivering pizza that I still get stuck in my head. This is a total genre exercise—it sounds like they formed to support OFF! at the House of Vans SXSW party for people who were last DIY in 1984. The first song is about impeaching Obama, and the best song is about juvenile delinquency, which is a state I am sure none of these people have experienced for at least thirty years?! Said song, "Community Service," is a jam though, and I wish the rest of the songs were as sick/classic sounding. SCHEISSE MINNELLI win the award for most pathetic band name in the history of punk, and it's almost impossible to put into words the truly wretched and embarrassing sounds they produce. Their music makes me want to grab the SICK PLEASURE/CODE OF HONOR split to remind myself that skateboarders have been responsible for great music. This is truly atrocious. The bass sounds like an out of tune fart, the guitar sounds like those guitar shaped toys you get at the dollar store where you press a button and a "sick lick" emerges, the vocalist sounds like a David Hasselhoff/gameshow host mutie from Planet Wack. The songs limp along towards painful mediocrity and it blows my mind that they have *eight records*. People like these jokers! Arg. I am gonna have to listen to FIX "Vengeance" to cleanse my palate after this sewage. In short, this should have been a GFP 7". (LG)
(Destiny / Rock Star)

GODCHILLA – "Cosmatos" CD

The cover's an art experiment, while the inside reveals some space fantasy. The band's from Iceland but the label logo (I believe it's self-released) is a pineapple. The music's kind of fucked up, too. The strong, pro sound works with what they're doing. Largely they're heavy and slow, with some groove and minor creative changes throughout, but generally wearing a riff through the floor. A few of these songs are interminable, though the shortest one I was able to hang with. They also utilize a mellower, mostly instrumental style, kind of polite indie rock with a hint of Middle Eastern flair. They're talented musicians, which works to their detriment when they abandon 4/4 and lose all momentum. The lyrics are goofy and ridiculous, along the lines of the inside artwork. The braver headbanging psychonauts may want to explore this band. (JM)
(Melur)

GOLERS – "In 'N' Outlaws" CD

GOLERS songs are a decent but often tedious mix of modern metal's tough dude heft and screeching at hardcore speed. There's no doubt they can play and all but there's something "off" about this. Maybe 'cause it's reminding me too much of something I don't mind listening to but don't exactly love like GOATWHORE and maybe SUPERJOINT RITUAL. Must be all this punk that's getting me 'cause I feel like these songs should be cut in half even though they average at about 2:50. I'm also curious why their drummer Jason Mosdell's old band GODLESS NORTH did a split with a Finnish neo-Nazi black metal band, GOATMOON. Though, thankfully GOLERS lyrics and attitude don't reflect that. (JD)
(self-released)

GRISWALDS – "Beyond the Television Scream" CD

I can't lie. Another RAMONES/QUEERS influenced punk band leaves me emotionless. It's formulaic, trite, and GRISWALDS don't suck at it—they've pretty much nailed it on the head. This bores the shit out of me. They probably don't give two fucks either, honestly. GRISWALDS came to party—in fact they've been reveling in it since '95, no apologies here. These dudes sound exactly like a sped-up RAMONES with some outright idolization of SCREECHING WEASEL. They have songs like "High School Psychopath Pt. 3," ode to the song off SCREECHING WEASEL album *Wiggle*, and "I Heard the Sound of my Brain Melting." Similar to "My Brain Hurts"? I think yes. Fitting that this is on the label named Monster Zero. (CR)
(Monster Zero)

HARD LEFT – "Skinheads Home for Christmas/Yesterday's Hero"

While I've always liked the catchiness of Oi!, nobody has ever really pegged me for a skinhead. This is a solid 7" containing what may turn out to be a punk Christmas classic and a very good cover of "Yesterday's Hero." The one thing about skinhead music that I've never quite gotten is that gravely voice they seem to really embrace. If you too embrace that, then you've got one more thing to like

about this one. That these guys have former members of East Bay power pop classics like CIAO BELLA, LUNCHBOX, and KIDS ON A CRIME SPREE is mind-blowing. (KK)
(Future Perfect)

HARD SKIN – "Saturday Night/Someone Like You"

Polish yer boots, shave your noggin, and plant your tongue firmly in your mate's cheek—it's a new HARD SKIN single. "Saturday Night" is a slower SLADE or early COCK SPARRER-style sweaty yell-along stomper and "Someone Like You" is a rager in the same pint glass as the COCKNEY REJECTS (maybe the best band ever), complete with Mick Geggus-style shredding guitar leads. A stellar release from these old blokes. (RO)
(JT Classics)

IMPALERS – "Psychedelic Snutskallar" 12"

Let's face it, opening your record with an eleven-minute D-beat pilgrimage is about as bold a move as you can make. A move that few-to-none would have even the slightest success with, but IMPALERS just made such a task look elementary with this title-track. Defined by the brute, hypnotic, smashing madness of a Scandi-infused D-beat slashing, repetition is boss here, and gives ample time for tension to build to breaking and really drive home a true-sonic-fury unrealized until now. With the puny life/attention spans of band and audience in 2014, this song has guitar solos longer than most newer band's entire discographies and not one second of the gnar is unnecessary. The flip side's four tracks continue to fire on a similar but by-no-means-ordinary Scandi-Mötor-beat trip, and as far as intensity is concerned, on par with the epic A-Side, but more direct and lashing. In a word, *Psychedelic Snutskallar* is "unreal," and I just wanna keep playing it over and over and over. (JU)
(540)

JACKALS – "Violence Is..." EP

Oh man, this hits my nostalgia sweet spot! Heavy, straightforward, dual-vocal crust punk that would have fit right in on the Eugene Records roster in the mid '90s à la DEFORMED CONSCIENCE, DEPRIVED or REVOLT. Burly riffs, spoken-word breakdowns and fists forever raised against the system. No wheels are being reinvented here, but this is easily one of the best straight-up crust records I've gotten to review this year. They could stand to take a bit more advantage of their two guitar setup, but that's a pretty minor quibble. Definitely worth checking out, especially if you have an abiding love for '90s political crust. (AU)
(Hardware)

JOANNA GRUESOME / TRUST FUND – split LP

This split with Wales' JOANNA GRUESOME and UK band TRUST FUND offers up some dreamy pop. What I love about JOANNA GRUESOME is how contained, sweet and melodic they can be, while utterly ripping at times. I mean, it's a hard line to walk, but they do it damn well. Their songs are not as catchy as those on their recent Slumberland full-length *Weird Sister*, but they're certainly still solid…you don't put your best stuff on a split, ya know? TRUST FUND sounds sonically similar, but in such close comparison they lack the same punch as JOANNA GRUESOME. (CR)
(HHBTM)

KITTENS HAVING KITTENS / NACHO BUSINESS – split EP

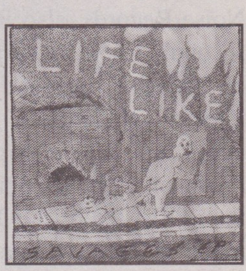
A double dose of tender fuzzy pop jams on this split. Two bands with two songs, one loud(ish), one quiet each. Everything about this release is sweetly simple, down to the very attractive minimalist packaging. NACHO BUSINESS starts with a floaty melody with extremely sparse drums but synchronized vocals throughout. The second track picks it up and adds a full drum backup, sounding a bit like early LEMURIA, though somewhat undeveloped. KITTENS HAVING KITTENS is a bit more composed with a more diverse sound featuring what sounds like cello and reverb upon reverb, making the backing vocals swirl around the song like a ghost. The louder of the two tracks, "Furry Heart," is a crunchy pop song with cute winding vocals which sound almost like a playground anthem. (DV)
(Phono Select / Sacramento)

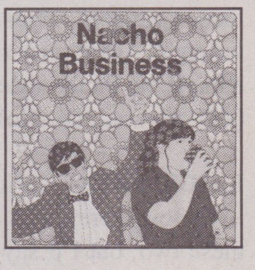
KIVESVETO GO GO – "Tutti Frutti" LP

Not so memorable pop punk/Oi! hybrid from Finland. The songs are super positive sounding and every single one has a sing-along chorus and SCREECHING WEASEL guitar lead that gets pretty fucking tired. Really, they could be singing about mainlining vodka and eating babies for all I know. Don't care. One song sounds like a cover. There are secret backwards messages at the end. Don't care. (RO)
(Rock'n'roll Bullshit, no info)

KOMPLIKATIONS – "Going Down" 12"

Belgium's KOMPLIKATIONS brings us a three-song EP worth of dance-heavy synthy-punk. The rhythms are strong and the synths are full and infectious, but I struggle to get fully into the vocal delivery. They are effective at delivering memorable catchy lines, but most of the time the vocal melodies are predictable and just follow the synths, making the songs sort of one-dimensional. The third track,





"Safety and Security," is the only exception once you get past the verse. Don't get me wrong though—this is a really fun EP and all three tracks are totally appropriate for your next punk dance party. (MA)
(Relax O-Matic / Rock Star)

KUNG FOOLS – "Modern Woes & Basement Shows" CD

Somewhat of an odd duck release, this CD is a collection of mostly unreleased songs from the KUNG FOOLS, a Minneapolis pop punk band, recorded in the mid '90s. A couple of these songs appeared on comps whilst these gents still regularly played together. I referred to this as "odd duck" because, firstly, this was released in an edition of 200 for the band's reunion show at the 20th anniversary of Extreme Noise Records, also in Minneapolis, and secondly, there is very little information on both this band and this release on the internet. Regardless, these three gents chug out reliable pop punk songs very much of 1995/96, perhaps more WEAS than DILLINGER FOUR, but also very much in that stylistic arena. But unlike those two bands, or others like the slightly later to the playing field BANANAS and the FOUR EYES, they don't really have anything that leaps out at me. Perhaps this is because I can't make out the lyrics at all, which means I lose the potential for WEAS's sappiness, FOUR EYES' humor, or even BANANAS' snot. Apparently they have a regional fan base, and this release seems aimed towards them. And I salute them. But as a West Coaster of a different generation, I must say that this record's appeal passes me by like a ship in the night. Again, it isn't bad, just not terribly remarkable for the style in that period. (LP)
(self-released, no info)

LAID TO REST – "Nuclear Thrash" CD

I know there's a bit of overlap between these two, but I'd say LAID TO REST's sound is about three quarters '80 thrash metal and a quarter '90s NYHC. The fast parts are a couple of notches below SLAYER speed, with gang vocals aplenty, and the breakdowns sound less rooted in hardcore and more tied to metal, even though they're coming from the same stem cell. The vibe here is more fun than goofy or meathead, a rare example of a band doing this style nowadays that I'd like to catch live. (DG)
(L.T.R.)

LAID TO REST – CD

Sometimes a record comes across your desk that really makes you feel good about the world. I mean, the fact that, in an age where people can be so ableist, a group of people with intellectual disabilities can find each other and play music is endearing. I'm really glad that LAID TO REST was so forward about this on the back cover of their record: "HEAVY METAL. ADVISORY. RETARDED SHIT"—in a parental advisory box, no less. They're also incredibly direct about outreach, letting their fans know that, if you're interested, you could always find them, "on Facebook, Reverbnation, or in a titty bar near you." That's incredibly sweet and let's hope that their availability can open up some important, reflective dialogue. It's also really cool to see that people are still using MS paint. The record cover is an amazing take on METALLICA's *Black Album* as well, but, get this, instead of a snake on the bottom of the right hand corner, it's a giant turd! Wow. Musically, this band sounds like mid period DRI and more contemporary acts like MUNICIPAL WASTE. The first two tracks, "Corporate Slime" and "Media Tyrant," deal with abuses of power and the lyrics are insightful. (Gold star!) The rest of the tracks are what you'd expect, songs about drinking (heavily) and guns ("Double Barrel"). All kidding aside, the presentation is tastelessly offensive and straight up moronic. (In metal and hardcore you have so many bands that pushed the envelope for a reason. Find one and get back to me.) Issues surrounding intellectual disabilities in this country are serious and, while I don't think LAID TO REST is mindfully trivializing these issues, they're just tacky. With minimal effort I found some great charities on the web. I encourage you to do the same and research this (if it's something that interests you) or, at the very least, realize that this is a very real issue and have some fucking empathy. For Fans of: Hebrew National All Beef Hot Dogs, plagiarizing essays in college, and running for local office. (MW)
(L.T.R.)

LENTIC WATERS / OLD SOUL – split LP

OLD SOUL have a very post-rock approach to their screamo. With songs over seven minutes long that tumble and explode, crescendo and valley, the result is enveloping. Listening to OLD SOUL, I like to learn back, reach my arms out and close my eyes, stretch my muscles and let the sound wash over me, like a musical baptism. The third song is a LOVE LOST BUT NOT FORGOTTON cover and gives a solid spin on the original, almost sounding like an original itself, which any good cover should. LENTIC WATERS are certainly right in step with OLD SOUL, with their side opening with a droning ghostly syncopated lull that boils over to a heavy dragging pound and humming leads that break down halfway through into a more post-hardcore pick up. Featuring three original songs, their side of the 12" is just as heavy and melodic, but with breakdowns more resembling mid-Atlantic noodly math core as opposed to the post-rock vibes of OLD SOUL. Both bands outputs are worth owning, great split. (DV)
(Dingleberry / IFB / Manlyax, no info / Zegema Beach)

LETHAL OVERDOSE – "Unfinished Business" LP

Fuckin' raging! Don't remember hearing of LETHAL OVERDOSE—they must be on some tape comps or some shit—but these are 1988 recordings of the obscuro Aussie thrashcore masters. Super fast and rough, but with those inexplicably catchy thrash punk vox that get stuck in your head for days. Style-wise it reminds me of so many of their late '80s SoCal contemporaries, like DISSENSION. Too bad LxOxDx never got vinyl out back in the day, because this shit puts most '80s Aussie hardcore to shame. Sick splatter wax and full color printed inner sleeve with a rainbow of flier images. Makes me want to hear the other bands they were playing with: DROKK, ROBOTIC RETARDZ, TERRIBLE VIRTUE, TOXIC VOMIT... (GB)
(Collision Course)

LIFE LIKE – "Savages" EP

At first glance, this record seems like another Midwest mutant-slime pogo-punk release—thanks mostly to the art

by Lumpy of DUMPERS fame—but once the needle drops, the truth is revealed. *Savages* starts off full speed ahead; the guitars are distorted and trebly, while the bass pounds out that down-tuned rumbly string sound. LIFE LIKE plays hardcore that is similar to what the SUICIDE FILE might have sounded like if they played hardcore influenced by punk and not by merch sales and message boards. The production is good but a little too clean, leaving me wondering if the sound could be reproduced live. LIFE LIKE's vocal delivery is probably my favorite thing about this record: raspy and angry but still delivered in an audible nature. Everything is pretty straightforward until the last song "No Touching!" and that's when "Things Fall Apart" (pun intended). "No Touching!" is the slowest and longest song on this release and moves away from the perfectly produced hardcore sound and towards more of a sloppy noise rock sound. If you can look past being tricked by the art and production value then LIFE LIKE is a band you should check out. (KC)
(Deranged)

THE MAD DOCTORS – "Snake Oil Superscience" LP

Heavy, psych/doom rock à la a less polished MONSTER MAGNET with a bit of MUDHONEY and a chunk of garage rock. They also do a good job mixing surf and twangy guitars and BLACK SABBATH riffs. While the description might not sound like anything super exciting in 2014, they know how to really make this work, mostly since they don't waste time on dragging out riffs and trying to be dull-as-fuck with their doom parts. Another highlight is "Transmission Impossible" where the reverb/distortion blend comes off like garage SABBATH. They also know how to play some straight-up surf instrumentals. Then they throw down the modern garage with "Let Me In" which sounds like it could've easily been a 7" on Goner or Burger. Their of '60s B-movie samples are a nice touch. In all a good first effort from a band that knows how to fuse different styles. (JD)
(King Pizza)

MARNOST / OAKEN – split LP

Giving this a listen on the day of the Bay Area's big monsoon storm freak-out, and I must say, it's pretty appropriate. Hungary's OAKEN is where you want to start this split, horrific crust-laden riffs under synths and jackhammer precision drumming. I feel as though the proto-breakdowns were preemptive, but the entire "stop the machines" theme of the split deems it appropriate enough. OAKEN's second song of two is much more melodic while remaining sludgy and post-hardcore metal. I'm definitely digging on the woman's heartfelt vocals halfway through the track, which ease the overall stress. A reverberating guitar solo comes through nicely as well toward the end of their side, with an echoy death rock post-punk feel. MORNOST start off their side with what seems like ten minutes of expansive, unfathomably slow drone metal. There are little whispers and sounds of crinkling paper or something in the background. Very mysterious and it reminds me of the interim moments throughout ACURSED's *Tunneln I Ljusets Slut* LP. Bizarrely, this side transitions into a locomotive cacophony of furious bass and wild blackened guitar and drums, as if it were aggressively pushed there. Vocals screech from deep within the forest's cave. Like, really far away, thank god, because they sound desperately hopeless. The entire side is one eighteen-minute track, admittedly a departure from MARNOST's expected style, per the LP liner notes. This is a more of an experimental project, based on Heiner Müller's *Hamletmaschine*. The last few minutes go into spoken word samples and ambient feedback. This is for you if contemporary NEUROSIS is your thing. In short, if you're into weird experimental grind/doom and performance art, get this split and watch this on YouTube: *Hamletophelia - dance fashion film*. (JR)
(Bookhouse / Catanarchy / Dingleberry, no info / Dzsukhell! / IFB / Itai Itai / Middle Man / MxFxL / Prejudice Me / Rotten Raven / THC&DIY / Zegema Beach)

MOVIE STAR JUNKIES – "Evil Moods" CD

I might have titled this one "Contemplative Moods." While the song titles have somewhat evil sounding names, the music itself sounds more introspective than satanic. The lyrics are included if you want to delve into that territory. The music is folky garage pop and the songs have a slow, dramatic style to them. It all sounds nice enough, but it isn't catching me. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

NACHO BUSINESS – "I Wanna Talk To You" EP

Immediate disclaimer: this is *not* the kind of wacky (stupid) party band you might expect with a name like NACHO BUSINESS. Guaranteed there exists at least one (possibly many) goofball garage bands with the same name. This record is far different (and superior). Imagine you were listening to an early GO-GO's demo but with a DINOSAUR JR influence. That's what the A-side sounds like! The B-side is a single slow number heavy on the reverb and bears a strong resemblance to the recent NEEDLECRAFT LP. This record also features

some of the most impressive album art I've seen in a while. So badass. All around a fantastic record, that leaves you hungry for more. Three songs are never enough! (FS)
(Phono Select / Sacramento)

NEVER AGAIN – "No Way!" EP

This is energetic, melodic hardcore by way of Dijon, France! NEVER AGAIN fire on all cylinders with this EP, ripping through six tracks of rousing hardcore in the vein of Bridge Nine heavyweights BETRAYED, RUINER and CHAMPION. Their galloping delivery provides the backdrop for the searing leads that break in from time to time and punchy, vocal change-ups keep things interesting. By fusing their nuanced sound with inspired choruses the band manages to forge an identity in a crowded field of players. My bet is that their best material is still to come—luckily, this solid release will hold me over 'til then. (RM)
(Boobs / Crapoulet / Desertion / Kanivo Chaos / A L'Ombre Decette Vie / Maloka / Stupid Kid / Old School, no info / Orchidscent)

NEW REGRETS – "Bleed For You" EP

Haven't thought of Clearview Records in at least a decade, but they've always been good for limited editions from punk rock royalty, and that's exactly what this NEW REGRETS EP is. Apparently Ed Pittman, original singer of TOXIC REASONS, is not dead, and he's recruited a new band to get back on the geezer punk reunion circuit. Seems like TOXIC REASONS is finally getting some newfound recognition with the recent reissue of their killer first two EPs. Always underrated, especially if you were down with the American Oi! sound of the '80s, Ed's vox put their stateside counterparts to shame. Stoked to say the vocals are still killing it in 2014 in NEW REGRETS—really raw, you can hear the strain of the past 30 years in every word. Rough and tumble American 'core sounds like '80s demo tracks and none of that newfangled production. 100 pressed on red wax, 500 on black. (GB)
(Clearview)

NOCNE SZCZURY – "1980" EP

Pasażer Records delivers another "document" record, recording the early history of punk and allowing this band's memory to survive past their generation. Here we get five live songs recorded from the New Wave Festival in Kolobrzeg 1980. The songs are cool, but quite primitive and the recordings poor, but these guys were among the first wave of Polish punk bands, and listening to these tracks will surely be a treat for all you punk historians out there. Insert includes excerpts from an interview with their singer. (FS)
(Pasażer)

NO SIR I WON'T – "The Whole Fucking World Is Shit" 12"

No modern band could possibly carry on the musical tradition of bands like CRASS and ALTERNATIVE like NO SIR I WON'T. When bands simply fill out popular punk templates it's boring. That's kinda what NO SIR I WON'T is doing, but it's really cool and interesting; definitely not boring. Their craft is innovative and provoking while recalling moments of the classics. They have specific things they want to say, and they do it vehemently and effectively: poetic, but easy to digest and analyze. Every statement is bold and delivered cleverly. Each chord progression, break, and rhythmic change is compelling. They won me over on the split with AUTONOMY that came out a few months ago, but this EP is even better! Feeling proud to be a punk right now. (MA)
(Drunken Sailor)

OOZE – "Don't Lose Sight of Misdirection" CD

I love a lot of Japanese hardcore but never fully got on board, so my knowledge is limited to the big names. Hearing this CD makes me feel like I need to do my research and get caught up on every band! OOZE (not the one recently interviewed in these pages) hails from Osaka and formed in 2007. Seven years later they finally launch this crushing 5-song CD! Ramcharging drums, huge gang vocal chorus, glorious Burning Spirits-styled solos, and incredible hooks. Four full-on ragers and one driving, mid-tempo song that recalls classics such as FORWARD's "Revolution" and LIBERATE's "Never Fading Away." The level of experience playing blazing hardcore punk is apparent to my ears, but just in case you need more convincing, OOZE features members of TECHNOCRACY and NIGHTMARE. Fans of PAINTBOX, ROCKY AND THE SWEDEN, and all the other aforementioned names in all caps, get this! (MA)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

OVERCHARGE – "Accelerate" LP

Welp, this one hooked me the moment I dropped the needle and heard the motorcycle starting and the wailin' Motörpunk guitar. Oh yeaaah these Italian dudes pretty much nail down the odes to MOTÖRHEAD / SODOM / WOLFBRIGADE on *every* song (and all at once). There's even some Tom Angelripper-like "oowaggh" (don't confuse with Tom G. Warrior's "Oüh!"). "As if There Were No Tomorrow" should be a metal-punk anthem of right now! Hell, the first go round on this I was playing air guitar. All the best elements are here: roaring vocals, pick slides, huge choruses, great riffs. I think I'm not the only one who wants to ride my bike all over town to this record (JD)
(Dead Beat)

PESADILLA DISTOPIKA – "No Hay Ninguna Manera de Eskapar" EP

Burly and distorted Latino hardcore, I think from Los Angeles. The style is pretty standard fare, but there are some cool elements here and there that liven things up a bit—i.e. the intentional crazy feedback squeal implemented in the intro part. While the intensity level doesn't vary much, the tempo changes and rhythmic accents create the hooks that I find necessary for repeated listens of modern hardcore EPs. This is in a league with contemporary Spanish hardcore bands such as ORDEN MUNDIAL and GLAM. (MA)
(Verdugo)

PORKERIA – "Desde la Era del Terror" LP

This is the second and sadly last full-length from these Texas hardcore rippers, and they're going out on a high note. The recording is a little thin (I'd love to hear more drums in the mix) but the songs are solid, DISCHARGE by way of DESTRUCCIÓN and Spanish punk melody. The crazy good guitar leads and solos have always been a defining aspect of the band, and they're out in force here to great effect. The stomping "Fuego" is a definite high-

light, a perfectly militant punk anthem for the 21st century. It's a shame they have called it quits, but this is as good a legacy record as a band could hope to have. (AU)
(Adelante)

P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S. – "Hit and Run/45 Minutes"
Side A is a heavy, faster-paced rocker with lots of lead guitar and a real driving beat. It's almost punk and metal and hard rock, all at the same time. Side B continues in the punk vein, but loses the metal and hard rock in favor of good, old-fashioned Americana. It keeps the steady pace of the A-track. The oldsters would call it a shit kicker. I was a little cautious at first, but it's growing on me. (KK)
(Doomtown Sounds)

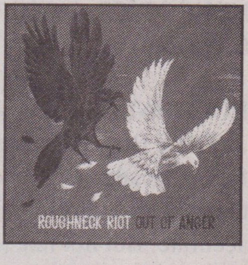
PUSRAD – "Erarre Humanum Est" LP
This band accomplishes the damn-near impossible feat of laying twenty-four thirty-second long songs to LP with what I would consider to be a polished recording by hardcore standards, and not only have it all be good, but *damn good* for the entire record. This band plays blazing fast early '80s style USHC that has tastes of both the adolescent fury of bands from Mystic comps plus the weirdness and sense of melody that characterized a lot of the Midwest bands (especially on a couple of anomalous '80s style alt-rock numbers). There are lots of hooks, changeups, and stop-starts galore that you'll miss if you don't pay attention (and might not remember even if you do), but not to worry, because more of it is just seconds away. (DG)
(Dead Beat)

CJ RAMONE – "Last Chance To Dance" CD
Oh brother. Is this for real? The guy they got to replace the immortal Dee Dee drags the collective corpses of the RAMONES through the mud for fun and profit. He gets help with grave digging from two of the ADOLESCENTS and a SOCIAL DISTORTION guy. It's competent pop punk, but couldn't he just use his real name? It's like the RAMONES without glue (I mean Carbona) and heroin. You get the idea. (RO)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

RASH TONGUE – "Treads of Progress" EP
The sound is bombastic but still thin in a weird way, giving RASH TONGUE an aggravating edge accentuated by one harsh high end guitar track lurking in the recesses of the mix. There's not a lot of nuance here, but they don't need any—breakneck hardcore built around an unhinged D-beat that launches more than lurches, an attack that doesn't let up even when it slows down (though, admittedly, it doesn't slow down very much or very often). Rather than lazily stick reverb on the vocals to make them spooky, they have a howling hollow quality closer to BIG BUSINESS than anything hardcore, which kinda makes them perfect for hardcore. RASH TONGUE do everything right here—this isn't just a record to listen to, it's a record to study. (WN)
(Hardware Records)

THE REAL KIDS – "Shake…Outta Control" LP
I really want to tell you that this is a great album, that it lives up to JOHN FELICE's promise in the liner notes that this is what the second REAL KIDS' album would have sounded like if they had been allowed to make it. However, I am an honest person. It is not 1978. There is only one REAL KID from their classic debut playing on this record. He is thirty-eight years older than he was then. There is no way it could be like it was. So if that's what you are expecting you'll be disappointed. I am a bit. However, I am a realist and never expect things to be as they were—I enjoy them for what they are. This is a good record. FELICE is one of the best songwriters ever. It does sound like the REAL KIDS, even if the playing is slower than you want it to be. Most of the songs on this album have been heard before in various live forms, but there are two new ones: "Tell Me (What You Want Me To Do)," which FELICE and bassist DICKIE OAKES wrote for MARY WEISS' 2007 solo album, and one written this year "That Girl Ain't Right," plus a cover of JONATHAN RICHMAN AND THE MODERN LOVERS' "Fly Into the Mystery." There are changes to songs I know well that I am undecided about. Lap steel has been added to "Common At Noon" giving it a more country feel—I like the original version with chimes better. Overall, this is a decent REAL KIDS record. If you already like them you will enjoy this. If you've never heard of them, you really should start with the first album. (CK)
(Ace of Hearts / Ugly Pop)

REBEL KIND – "Today" LP
An argument could be made that this album is more of a folk album than a punk record (only important because this zine only reviews *punk* records), but the music is pretty kickass, so let's let it slide. This all-lady trio from Michigan creates a '60s throwback sound, soft and mellow bedroom jams. The tunes are mainly established on a jangly folk structure (heavy on the reverb), but they infuse elements of psych and surf to round out the sound. This is what GRASS WIDOW would sound like if they got really into CAROLE KING's *Tapestry*. It's soft, sweet, and beautiful, yet somehow it still manages to *rock*. Great stuff. (FS)
(Urinal Cake)



RED DONS & TV SMITH – "A Vote For The Unknown/This City"

The A-side features one of punk's all-time best songwriters, TV SMITH of THE ADVERTS, backed by one of the best current groups in the game. The flip is a great new RED DONS track. Not sure how this record came about but it's a nice slice of barbed, tuneful punk rock. (AM)
(Deranged)

RHDP – "Parusa" EP

Severely rockin' punk with lyrics in Tagalog—though even more interesting is that this band is from Virginia Beach, VA! Lots of big guitars that are somewhere around BLACK FLAG. (Remember that band? I think they were good once.) Plus, RHDP has some *very* spirited vocals. The tempo shifts into the doom-influenced sound are also a treat as the vocals are so damn good. Crazy thing to know that it's just two people on this recording. The flip is more straight-up heavy rock/metal influenced with loads of harmonics and crazy bent chords as well. Totally worth your time! (JD)
(Tension Head)

THE RIVALS – "Here Comes The Night/Both Sides"

Originally released in 1980, the second and final single from Kent's RIVALS features a punked-up version of a THEM song that sounds more like it should come from Belfast in 1978, a good thing in my book. The flip is a similarly spiky power pop number that bears resemblance to contemporaries the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS. (AM)
(Breakout)

ROUGHNECK RIOT – "Out of Anger" CD

These Brits have been around the block for a decade or so now. They describe themselves as folk-punk, which is sort of accurate. But not like the way bands these days suddenly rediscover that they always loved WOODY GUTHRIE, and start twaddling along with embarrassing acoustic songs. Nope, this six-piece sounds pretty much exactly what you'd expect mid-period BAD RELIGION to sound like, if BAD RELIGION simply added a mandolin, banjo, and accordion into the mix, i.e. that same melodic hardcore speed, harmonies and aggression, coupled with an additional folk instrumentation overlay. And it really fucking works. Like the LEVELLERS (remember them?) doing NOFX covers. Or the MOVING HEARTS covering BAD RELIGION's "Kerosene". I'm an instant convert. (RK)
(TNS)

SEE YOU IN HELL – "Odvolej" flexi

A two-song, limited edition, "gig only" one-sided square flexi, self-released by Czech Republic's stalwarts SEE YOU IN HELL for a celebration of their fifteenth year as a band. "Odvolej"("Recant") muses on the need to forget the past, over a tumultuous eruption of the tempered simmering charge of European political hardcore, hammered with searing metallic and titanic flourishes of Japanese Burning Spirits. The second track, "Proti Proudu" ("Against the Stream") rages mid-tempo with adept, growling vocals calling for the need to fight against conformity to the crowd. SEE YOU IN HELL put what is beyond laudable and could even be considered a teachable amount of enormous care and thought into their activities and releases, and here is no exception, with another killer illustrated cover, sticker, download and a small full-color poster of flyers from nearly every show they have played in the last decade-and-a-half around the world. Awesome! (KS)
(self-released)

S.H.I.T. – "Feeding Time/Private Lies"

S.H.I.T. set themselves apart from other clean-cut reverb-and-feedback peddlers by wielding these elements effectively in songs that are both dark and well crafted. The resulting sound is an aggressive haze, with a half-speed toompa beat, and cacophonic vocals that are somehow snotty, screechy, and babbling all at once, and drenched in delay. "Feeding Time" builds up to the first verse with dual-layered feedback as all the instruments come in, until the vocals hit like a brick. The song rides on decent chorus and verse riffs for a couple of rounds before slowing down a couple of notches for a different riff before descending into feedback. "Private Lies" is the more straightforward and lethargic of the two tracks, riding on a couple of riffs for most of the song, before falling apart in slow motion as a conclusion. These two songs are also perfectly suited for the 7" single medium (despite "The Feeding" being on their demo). I am always skeptical of hype, but S.H.I.T. lives up to it. (DG)
(Static Shock)

MATT K SHRUGG – "Goes Bananas" flexi

Remember when that awesome band played and we all got wasted and we were arm in arm, in love with punk, scared that the night was going to be over and we'd have to be sober and back at work in a few hours? Remember when the band ran out of songs, so they just played three or four flawless BANANAS covers and we all went even more apeshit? That was fucking awesome, right? Hell yes, it was! For the fucking life of me, though, I don't know why anyone would ever put out a flexi of three perfectly done BANANAS covers. I don't want to sit at home and hear anyone play note for note versions of one of the funnest punk bands alive. I'd honestly rather hear the original. Always. Never, never, never, never do I want to hear this guy's voice with the music of the BANANAS. Someone did a BANANAS tribute in nu-metal? Jazz? Afro-soul? In German? Backwards? Fucking awesome! I want to hear that shit right now! Note for note, karaoke style, so it sounds like the band hired a new singer? Oh, hell no! To be honest, though, it sounds awesome. I would lose my mind if I was at a show and y'all played it like this. (DZ)
(Phono Select)

SICK THOUGHTS – "My Mess My Life" LP

I am not sure exactly, but I think SICK THOUGHTS is sort of like a punk MANFRED MANN where the entire band shifts on each release, a revolving door of band members with one central genius-like orchestrating figure. This LP contains the first recordings created by said genius from a few years ago, and they are incredible bedroom sounds, desperate teenage meltdown feel! Shredding guitars like a juvenile CRIME "Frustration," true blown-out mind melters for those that want rock dead and a new desolate savage vision! All teenagers should do bands like this instead of stupid cover band bullshit.

Broken sounds for broken minds! Yes! The true sound of fuck you! (LG)
(Dead Beat)

SOLPÄÄTOS – "Robotti" EP

The second four-song EP by Japan's SOLPÄÄTOS is still an apparent and direct reference to classic early '80s Finnish hardcore like RIISTETYT and APPENDIX. At the same time it unmistakably arrives at the highly energized point of slightly garage-ier Japanese hardcore that marks bands anywhere from SMASH YOUR FACE and KGS to BBQ CHICKENS and TOMORROW, where a measured control battles to contain unhinged looseness. With that, the impact here is a little more immediate and brash than the first EP, as all-in-Finnish lyrics and wail overtop and melodic shards and guitar leads surface to frame the mayhem, though the title track is a classic mid-tempo '80s Finnish style dirge-y howler. No translation, Scandinavian cut'n'paste copy-shop design sense. Cool! (KS)
(Hardcore Survives)

SOLUNSKI FRONT – "Mali Svet" LP

In the words of SOLUNSKI FRONT's vocalist: "I really don't know what to say about our discography. I'm not even sure for myself, who and when and what was released among our recordings." Featured on a number of Yugoslavian compilations from the mid 1980s, as well as a post-dissolution EP release, SOLUNSKI FRONT finally get the vinyl discography treatment here, with seventeen studio tracks and two live recordings. This beautifully packaged reissue is Yugoslavian punk from 1983-4 that fits just perfectly on the border leading into the first wave of hardcore. I love the bouncy, plunky bass tone. The thought of being in a punk band in Belgrade in 1983, much less a band that openly spoke out against the ruling regime, is hard to wrap my head around, especially 30 years on. There's a haunting tone here, particularly on Side A, that recalls TOŽIBABE, while Side B much more reflects raw, thrashier proto-hardcore. Overall, it's a great contribution to the documentation of international punk and hardcore that is still so sorely needed. The photos presented here are also a touching glance into the personalities of SOLUNSKI FRONT and the genuine enthusiasm of the emergent Yugo punk scene. Another great release from Ne! Records, who also reissued the likes of U.B.R. and PROCES. (SZ)
(Ne!)

STALE PHISH – "Rock N Roll Revert" LP

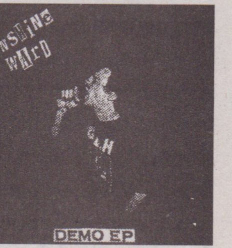
PHISH is probably the worst/most boring band ever, so naming your band STALE PHISH, which makes it seem like you're worse than PHISH, is fucking stupid. That being said, let's tear into this record. STALE PHISH *love* skating. How do I know that? Well...maybe it's the skate and destroy font or the Vision Street Wear logo they use to write their name. Or maybe it's song titles like "Shred Sled," "Drain the Pool," "Skatecation Holiday," or "While You Skated Street (I Skated the Pool with Your Mom)". They also love songs about hooking up with people's moms, but that's beside the point. It's only natural that a band this into skating would have a mid '80s skate punk sound and most of this record sounds like AGRESSION or D.I. Early skate punk bands, however, were sloppy and full of energy and much like skating, you never knew what was gonna get thrown at you. STALE PHISH don't reproduce that authentic sound of the past, the feeling you get that they were probably shredding in between takes while recording *Don't Be Mistaken*. *Rock N Roll Revert* sounds like it was recorded very far away from a skate park. That being said, if you live to skate pools and make fun of kids for mall grabbing, you'll still probably enjoy this release. (KC)
(Not Like You)

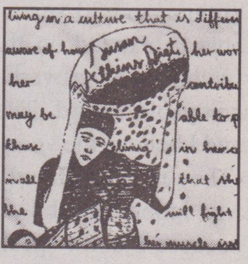
SUNSHINE WARD – "Demo" EP

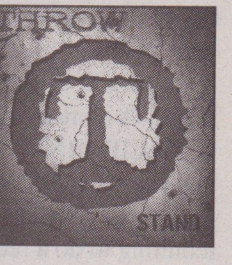
This is the vinyl release of SUNSHINE WARD's demo from earlier this year and it is a welcome addition to the persistently near-flawless (in my opinion) Boston scene of late. Ex-BRAIN KILLER should seal the deal for most of you. Heavy and tough Japanese/Swedish influenced hardcore, fast riffs and pounding rhythms that don't just rely on D-beats. I thought the tape was great, but this release showcases just how determined and tight SUNSHINE WARD is even on their first recording. UK82 stomper "Progress" takes the lead for me, but this is great from start to finish. (SZ)
(Hardware)

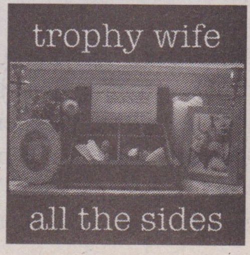
SUSAN ATKINS DIET – "Vagina Envy" EP

From god-knows-where, SUSAN ATKINS DIET are, at their core, an energetic DIY garage punk band, but their patriarchy-smashing, personal/political lyrics set them apart from many of today's bottle-smashing Farfisa goons. At their strongest (see "Bitch Slap" and "Rosemary's Baby"), they come off as a re-channeled surf rock RUDIMENTARY PENI, which simply shouldn't work, but does quite well. The remaining tunes are no slouches either, but the bookend tracks are just fantastic. I'm eager to hear more, and I'm eager to find my own copy of this 'un. (MC)
(self-released)









TALKY TINA – "Just A Little Broken" CD

This local band is a cross of '80s college radio rock and power pop punk—I'm thinking TOO MUCH JOY and later DEAD MILKMEN. There is also bit of acoustic material here. I have reviewed these guys before, they're ok and I'm sure they put on a fun show in a bar for the locals. The off-key vocals by the various singers hold this back in a pop sense, although these guys seem to be trying to have fun as opposed to trying make it big or change the world (RL)
(self-released)

TAPE REC – "Death Friends" LP

Ya know, I gotta say I really enjoy the alt revival bands that a lot of punks find themselves doing nowadays. It reminds me of when I used to watch VH1 as a kid and they would play MARCY PLAYGROUND and shit. This record doesn't sound like that but it definitely brings back those memories. This record is groovy, driving, and layered. They really took their time trying to write DINOSAUR JR tracks, specifically the ones off *Bug*. DINOSAUR JR was opening up ground and laying the groundwork for grunge, and 30 years later TAPE REC is able to expand on that original formula (without going overboard) and create an enjoyable record. There's no lyric sheet and I believe the vocals are in Portuguese. (They're from Brazil so that's my guess. My ignorance shows on stuff like this because I don't speak another language. If I'm wrong, let us know.) For someone who isn't schooled in languages (even my own!), the vocals become an instrument unto themselves. The melodies are ethereal and add to the overall groove of the record. A more modern comparison would be CALIFORNIA X. All in all, stoked on this record and I hope they do more. For fans of: Levis Sherpa lined jackets, Bands reuniting to do a record front to back, and art galleries. (MW)
(IFB / Transfusao Noise Records)

THROW – "Stand" CD

The short review is that this disc is packed with high-energy melodic/metallic punk played with precision and delivered with teeth. If you'd like to dig a little deeper (and you should), THROW has been active in spurts since 2000 with various lineups, all featuring the guitarist/vocalist from DEAD ENDS, one of the first hardcore/thrash bands from Philippines. Taking cues from modern catchy hardcore as well as their own past, *Stand* is almost a full hour of bouncy hardcore and amped up pop punk numbers with screaming solos and Al's trademark sneering vocals that should be known far beyond their home country. If you ever lapse and think you're listening to a by-the-numbers punk disc, bits like the NYHC stomp in "Survive" or the excellent "We Are the Revolution" snap you back to reality in an instant. While I honestly wish that this record was more of the hardcore/thrash and less of the melody, I appreciate that THROW makes it all work. Lyrics are harsh but determined missives that are focused on their existence in Philippines, both personal and political. Fantastic shit that will likely fly well under the radar of most punks looking for the next trend... and that will be the punks' loss. (WN)
(self-released)

TROPHY WIFE – " All the Sides" CD

A wild almost math rock like NEED?! The guitars tracks cascade off each other in that math-y way, building up a mood and the first song reminds me of the desolation of HOOVER almost but they have this bombastic snot power that reminds me of the Rachel/Radio magic. Way less theatrical than the NEED though. It seems like something Dischord would have put out at some point? Actually this makes me think of LUNGFISH—the repetitive / incantation style, lulling and hypnotic but free. Both women sing, and they have cool voices, strong but clear. I like this a lot. Wish they'd sent the LP for the *MRR* record collection! (LG)
(SRA)

ÜBERTOS – "We Do Eat Lions" LP

ÜBERTOS, from Bergen, Norway, plays garage pop/power pop that is syrupy-sweet. It's super-polished in a way that sounds slick and well produced. Some of the chord progressions are typical of the genre, but others come out of left field, but never in a way that's awkward or ill advised. The production leads me to comparisons to newer REIGNING SOUND releases, but that's where those comparisons end. ÜBERTOS is way more into the pop realm than anything else. This is a good LP for fans of the garage-pop genre. It's not particularly engaging or groundbreaking but it is good. (GH)
(self-released)

URBAN JUNIOR – "The Truth About Dr. S & Mr. P—A One Man Symphony in E Minor" CD

This is weird. I use that in the best, most interesting meaning of the word. From what I can make out *The Truth About Dr. S & Mr. P—A One Man Symphony in E Minor* is a psychiatric rock opera consisting of a conversation between Mr. P speaking in German and Dr. S replying in English. The music is lo-fi garage industrial dance songs made even stranger by the fact that the man on the cover (whom I assume is URBAN JUNIOR) looks like an early TV version of a small town drugstore owner. I don't understand any of it, but I really like how it sounds. It is catchy, aggressive and odd. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

USELESS CUNTS – 12"

Featuring members of Diskelmä and Lapinpolthajat, this Helsinki band's debut vinyl nine-song 45 RPM 12" leans heavier in the direction of the scalding howl of RIISTETYT *Skitsofrenia* or LAMA, with strong jumpy bouts of pulsating mid-tempo hardcore charge with long consonant screams and shouted choruses, bumped between threads of melody and blunt pound. A perfected dose of this tried and true Finnish style replete with taut musicianship and lyrics in Finnish assailing bankers, the cops, junkies and war, alongside songs marked with a bit of darker angst and ennui. The black and white pen'n'stippled cover features porcine humanimals in business suits and ties chaining up the punks and drinking the brains from their decapitated heads with a straw—*exactly*. There needs to be more than 300 numbered copies of this, because it rules and we all pretty much feel that way. Fuckin' boss record! (KS)
(Bad Hair Life / Hakaniemi Hardcore / Rapina)

VACANT STATE – "Chains" EP

VACANT STATE dish out three songs of plodding, tuneful Oi!, one straight-ahead hardcore number, and a final track that goes between the two. They are very much a hardcore band influenced by Oi! This kind of thing could very easily bore me, but the songs have enough hooks and nuances to keep my interest, and the hardcore song reminds me of the FIX song "Truth Right Now," of all things. The singer happens to sound a lot like Choke, but this doesn't necessarily remind me of any of his bands except in the broadest sense. I hope they're as good live as they are on record. (DG)
(Hardware / Warthog Speak)

VCR – "VCR's Greatest Hits!!!" EP

There are so many things to like about this record. First, the song "Fake Freaks (Fuck Off)." Great title and sentiment. The EP starts with a loud police siren. Then goes into a manic clattering of guitars, drums and organ presided over by a pained singer. He screams and yelps and whines. He's got one of those great punk vocal styles that will make your parent ask, "What is this racket you're listening to?" Then you have to turn the record up louder. This is just plain cool. (CK)
(Barfbag)

VEUVE SS – "Descente" EP

I've been digging this Lyon-based unit's off-kilter hardcore for a few years, and this one-sided 7" is no disappointment. Bookended by passages of chillingly mechanical ambient noise, the oh-so-brief heart of the record lies in two stabs of precise, modern-sounding powerviolence that resolve into tough mid-tempo pounding just when you were expecting things to go all black metal. Some of the more beautiful art I've seen on a hardcore record, which makes it kind of a shame that only 200 copies of this were actually pressed. Better hurry, collector scum! (WB)
(Nerdcore)

VICIOUS PLEASURES – "Scattered" EP

Ooh, I like. Penny Rimbaud style vocals over early '80s WIPERS punk with frenetic post-punk guitar. Portland's VICIOUS PLEASURES rips through two feverish songs on side A with nary a breath, somehow maintaining a dark, broody feel. Things slow down a bit on the B-side's "In these Walls," feeding on an ARCTIC FLOWERS vibe. Solid. (CR)
(1859 / Different Kitchen)

VOIGHT-KAMPFF – "Last House on the Right/ Little Dyings"

If you like modern mopers molding themselves after their forebears from chilly Thatcherian England, this wee record might just suit your taste. VOIGHT-KAMPFF lay on the poppier side of things on face A. This is a peppy number, parts ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN, MERCHANDISE, and the MAGNETIC FIELDS, at least vocally. Side B is much more of a SIOUXSIE number, with its sparse guitar and thumpier drum programming. For you gothies out there, this might be the single for all seasons, all ROBERT SMITH/MORRISEY swaying about on one half, and SIOUXSIE SIOUX meets modern punkers, say, ARCTIC FLOWERS icily glowering on the other. As far as pastiche goes, the instrumentalist (this is a bedroom duo) nails the requisite tones and amount of reverb, though the bass lacks the melodic style of Andy Rourke or Michael Dempsey that some find so alluring. I know I've come down on imitators hard in the past, but I'm a sucker for a good pop song, and in this case "Last House on the Right" is perfect bedroom dance material, comfortable as an old sweater, even if you just bought it and it's not old but just distressed. (LP)
(Deranged)

WAINGRO – CD

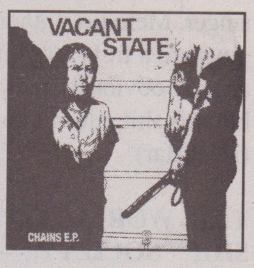
Heavy jams abound from this Vancouver stoner rock trio, who take clues from decades-old long hair rock and update the sound with a QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE vibe. The aggressive vocal delivery manages to bridge genres and leave us with a collection of influences but without a clear direction. Their heavy rock mayhem falls in line with other notables HIGH ON FIRE, AKIMBO and FU MANCHU and is certainly impressive but unfortunately not the epic, trance-inducing bong and beer fueled ride I was hoping to catch on this, their debut full-length. The buzz is loud with these guys, so I hope to come to my senses and figure out what everyone else already knows about WAINGRO. Until then, only "Black Dawn" will be holding it down for them on my commute playlist, a reminder I will happily keep. (RM)
(self-released)

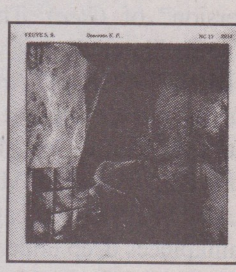
THE WEDNESDAY KNIGHTS – "Mister Devil" 10"

This Norwegian band plays garage music that reminds me of the '90s scene. The songs are kind of bluesy with a Farfisa. The singer has a rough voice that is not exactly hard to listen to, but somewhat abrasive. They seem like a tamer version of the MAKERS. Also, the band name is terrible. (CK)
(Back To Beat)

WHEN THERE IS NONE – "Warpaint" LP

Hoping they sound like a mashup of LEATHERFACE and HOT WATER MUSIC, but ending up sounding like a bored BRAID with a raspy throated





singer. Melodic, anthemic, dude rock, the guys are a little more intricate than some, and are obviously fans of some emo stuff, but this shit puts me to sleep. (DZ)
(Rockstar)

THE WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY – "This Packed Funeral" CD

I dunno how exactly to describe this, other than "drama department" or "cabaret" rock? There's a load of ideas here but this band (who I know have been at this a long time) have this overly conceptual lyric and song structure, which make this utterly boring. Alright, it might be OK in very small doses, as if it was, say, in a movie or a segment of a TV show (though this mostly sounds like an "alternative version" of *Glee*). The female vocalist sounds like an "edgy" version of NATALIE MERCHANT. And for fuck's sake, the main male vocalist on "Don't Get Me Started, Don't Get Me Wrong" sounds like BILLY JOEL! May this be forever sealed in a NPR totebag, wrapped in *Slate* thinkpieces deep under the sea! (JD)
(Alternative Tentacles)

WOUNDED KNEE – "Maladjusted" CD

This disc appeals to the part of my brain that occasionally craves knuckle-dragging meaty hardcore but, fortunately, Poland's WOUNDED KNEE bring more to the table than chugga chugga and breakdowns. Musically, they are fully on point: burly ass hardcore with brutal vocals groomed for the pit and the dog pile sing-alongs. And when the kids sing along, they are singing words of economic injustice, words that question the existence of god and the church's influence over society, words encouraging self-motivation. (There's also one about going to the gym and working out.) And when you hear WOUNDED KNEE shout *"power makes pigs from people"* you take notice. An unexpected gift, this one—*Maladjusted* will probably get a few more spins around these parts. (WN)
(Spook)

YES I'M LEAVING – "Mission Bulb" LP

Noisy, steady but catchy '90s-inspired rawk. The vocals are distorted and pissed off sounding but the choruses and build-ups are really catchy. They really can lock into a nice pattern that mixes the heavy bass and searing guitar sound. Other times, like on "You Can Try" they do this mix of AmRep bands and I dunno...the FALL? Definitely gonna be in the running for my Top 10 of 2014. Extra points for the cover with a Henry Kissinger lookalike smashing ice off a tire. Though, from the distance it looks more like he's smashing the Earth, which would make more sense. This record is totally worth your time. (JD)
(Homeless)

YES I'M LEAVING – "Slow Release" LP

Noise rock! Rock! Indie. Rock! YES I'M LEAVING puts a slightly new spin on the noise rock sounds of the early to mid '90s, including more melodic and catchy moments. For the most part, it works. Yes, this is in the mold of SHELLAC and JESUS LIZARD, with the clear drums pounding extremely hard, the guitar tone (not always) that has that metallic tinny sound, and a vocalist who is often understandable and in your face. They do mix it up, though—"Care Less" for example, is indie rock with a nod to early DINOSAUR JR.. The track even has the requisite sad mope, with a chorus of "I just don't care anymore." YES I'M LEAVING call Sydney, Australia home and this is their second full-length. While I haven't really needed to hear any more noise rock recently, this album really grew on me. (MH)
(Homeless)

YOUNG CONSERVATIVES – 12"

Interesting debut EP here from this band made up of 1990s UK punk/hardcore vets. YOUNG CONSERVATIVES comes out of the gate wearing their politics on their sleeves, but it's not trite or clichéd political hardcore. These are the angry ruminations of disillusioned older punks. Like many of us, they find it hard to be optimistic about the political future despite the small positive gains that have been made. The backdrop to the disenchantment takes the form of six tracks of somewhat melodic, yet heavy, mid-paced hardcore. It's an enjoyable maelstrom of LEATHERFACE, ROLLINS BAND, DAG NASTY, and FUCKED UP. The FUCKED UP comparison is most strongly felt in the vocal delivery, mainly because the vocals take the form of hoarsely shouted complicated political diatribes, rather than the more tuneful singing you get with the likes of DAG NASTY or even LEATHERFACE. Great stuff, I look forward to hearing more. (AM)
(Obscene Baby Auction)

ZERO BOYS – "Hollywood" CD

This CD EP is a tribute to the ZERO BOYS original guitar player who supposedly OD'd in 2000, and includes five old songs written by Terry "Hollywood" Howe which were never properly recorded until now, by the current lineup. These five songs have a trashy rock'n'roll vibe à la the NEW YORK DOLLS or the DEAD BOYS. A well done release with a good raw feel. (RL)
(Z-Disk)

V/A – "Za Krótko! Za Szybko!" LP

112 bands dishing out one 20-second song each. Stylistically all over the place (crust, SXE hardcore, pop punk, Oi!, classic snotty punk…and, of course, grind) and presented in alphabetical order, *Za Krótko! Za Szybko!* fills your ears with more Polish bands than most people will hear in a lifetime. On the good side, the quality level is shockingly high, so even if you don't particularly *like* a band, you probably aren't going to think they suck. (And they are gonna be over soon anyway—like, really soon.) It's a concept that's certainly been done before, but the LP is a bold format and I think this comp pulls it off in grand fashion. (WN)
(Kwadraciok / Pasażer)

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Different Kitchen: differentkitchen.bigcartel.com
Dingleberry: myspace.com/dingleberryrecords
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DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR Attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide contact information and a postpaid price with your demo! Please note, anything other than vinyl or CD will be reviewed in this section. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Vanessa Asswipe, Matt Badenhop, Robert Collins, Layla Gibbon, Greg Harvester, and Jason Ryan.

1971 – Dense and drawn out, mostly mid-tempo indie/alt rock through a DIY production from Winnipeg. They have a lot of really interesting ideas that mostly come through in the melodies and rhythms, somewhere in the RITES OF SPRING camp to use a punk reference, but maybe not on purpose. In most of the songs each part gets dragged out a bit too much making the songs too long in my opinion. The fourth song is the standout track and is much more succinct in getting their idea across—it has a cool feel and great melodies and is probably half the length of the others. Overall a good band, but maybe a little too self-indulgent. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, faxedrecords.storenvy.com)

ABOLITIONIST – Yessssssss. Roughneck hardcore punk attack from Portland's accessible hardcore punk act ABOLITIONIST. This is the most aggressive work I've heard from the band and I've been very pissed off lately so it takes a lot. A big PROPAGANDHI influence comes through and no complaints or skeptical results to be found here. The loose war-like snare production on this is chilling. The lyrics are clear and impassioned. ABOLITIONIST is political skate-core at its best these days. GRAND COLLAPSE/ABOLITIONIST/ Said comparisons from The Great North as the headliner...That's the dream tour de force, I'd say. Pick this up. (Jason) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, deathculturetapes. bandcamp.com)

ANTI TODO – *Buenos y Malos* – Gruff vocals, pogo-inducing rapid-fire 1-2-1-2 punk interrupted by short blasts of raging hardcore and a handful of hopelessly anthemic street punk numbers (and a ska song that works far better than it should). Tracks recorded in the mid '00s but just now making their way into our hands, Colombia's ANTI TODO crank through 45 minutes of awesome on this disc. Highly recommended! (Robert) (18-song CD-R, lyrics not included, antitodocolombia@gmail.com, infrasonidomedia@gmail.com)

ASESINATO DEL PODER – Truly sick and savage insurrection sounds from the north of Spain, the eternal sound of rage and discontent...This is just so fucking good! The lyrics, the feeling and power of the music—so smart and destructive all at once, gives me goosebumps. No more prisons, no more war, up the punx, and off the pigs. Sometimes the simplest punk constructions are the easiest to turn into corny replications of a once-cool idea, but sometimes people make those ideas sound fresh and radical and transcendent. I love this tape. It's furious, falling apart D-beat for furious, falling apart listeners. (Layla) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, asesinatodelpoder.bandcamp.com)

BAD BLOOD – This Olympia/Chicago outfit kicked my ass in a living room this past summer, and their creepy crawl, no bullshit, feisty punk sounds just as good in my living room tonight (which is the same as my bedroom and my foyer) as it did in that one, but with slightly less carnage. Maybe it's just hardcore punk...maybe, but BAD BLOOD are a little uglier (without being assholes), a little dirtier (without being clean), and take those fukkd-up sounding guitars to a really, really good place. Get fukkn wild on this one, get fukkn weird, just don't miss the boat. Also, the breakdown on "Can't Stand It" is next level. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, Ralph Rivera c/o L. Sherman, 2960 W. Montrose Ave, Chicago, IL 606218, notnormaltapes.bandcamp.com)

BAJA BLATZ – First off, apologies to the band because a *certain someone at MRR* (not me) was supposed to review this tape months ago. BAJA BLATZ was a summer 2014 punk band in Boston that screamed their politics into your face while still maintaining an air of fun and "I don't give a fucking fuck, you fucking shit." My reference points are a little dated and I would compare this (at points) to '90s pop punk while discerning modern punks would call this pogo punk. But, yeah, it's pogo punk. It's super fucking catchy and sounds like they were blowing up the basement parties when they were around. Shit rules. Oh yeah, there's a SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN cover on here too. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, bajablatz. bandcamp.com)

BLACK LOVE – Fuck! According to the insert, this was the soundtrack to a stage performance and the sound source was *Strange Odyssey,* a 1981 Texas Instruments text adventure cassette game. "The action involved the amplified sounds of various kinds of tape—audio, duct, magic, Scotch—being torn and tested while a measuring tape was extended to its full length and whipped around the darkness of the performance stage in a haphazard manner." If you like the harsh sounds of early analog computer sounds being ripped and manipulated for five minutes, this will be your thing. I'm confused, but intrigued and delighted. (Greg) (2 "song" cassette, lyrics not included, Hertz Lion Releasing, PO Box 1211, Ventura, CA 93002)

BLOODY SHOW / SEX TIDE – *split* – SEX TIDE play big-sounding psyche damage with cool DINAH CANCER vocals intoned over the top, really liked them. Like a more bashed together basement DESTROY ALL MONSTERS. BLOODY SHOW paled in comparison, more trad dad rawkin' garage attack, which on its own I probably woulda appreciated but swiftly bored with after listening to the A-Side. I liked the dumb repetitive guitar riffs, cool KBD reflexes at work, but the wacky COUNT VERTIGO vocals killed it for me, but maybe they won't for you? (Layla) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, $5ppd, 2474 N 4th Street, Columbus, OH 43202)

BOOTS – I kinda feel cheated, because the cover made me think I was getting some sugar sweet skinhead shit. But at the same time I feel super lucky, because I got an awkward and vaguely inept female-fronted sugar sweet punk/pop outfit with some of the most gloriously worthless keyboards I've ever heard. It's so childish and borderline stupid that I think it might be brilliant. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, Lisa 1254 N. Maplewood Ave, Apt. 3, Chicago, IL 60622, bootschicago@gmail.com)

BRICKS – *No Flesh* – As I've mentioned in the pages of this rag before, "What the fukk is going on in Halifax?!" It seems like each month the demo box gives birth to a new banger, and this month that banger is BRICKS. Menacing, punishing hardcore that plops a sick bummer vibe right in the middle of the fashion pit at a cool kid show. It's the meaty mid-tempo crouch/mosh jammers that you know *(and love?)*, kicked in the teeth by putrid blast beats and contempt. Demo of the month for this guy. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, brickspunk.bandcamp. com)

THE BRISTLES – *Val?* – Excellent, unrelenting D-Beat and punk from Sweden's the BRISTLES. This thing is over in a flash (seven minutes tops, maybe?) but there's not a wasted second in any of these songs. All the songs are related to the recent Swedish elections and all of 'em are pissed as shit. Totally fucking killer. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, thebristles.wordpress.com)

BURN VICTIM – *Rat King* – Hi-fi powerviolence drenched in distortion. It's down-tuned and crunchy but not your typical heavy production. Very raw. Short blasts of negativity and discord. They do a CHARLES BRONSON cover, if you weren't already with me. (Matt) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, burnvictummmmm.bandcamp.com)

BURN VICTIM – *Pinto* – A much heavier offering production wise, as compared to the *Rat King* cassette. More extremely harsh powerviolence from Hamilton, Ontario. Blast-beats, knuckle dragging, and throat-shredding vocals. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, burnvictummmmm.bandcamp.com)

B.E.T.O.E / D.H.K. – *Caminando Sobre Ruinas* – More simple, raw hardcore from Peru's D.H.K.—three originals plus covers of ANGRY MOB and FIRMEZA 10. Sounds great, except, where's the kick drum? B.E.T.O.E. offers up four originals and a SHITLICKERS cover, which is an appropriate choice for their sound. Their side was recorded live in Venezuela, and the quality is pummeling. The tape is housed in a great looking hand-screened, sturdy little tape box, and in a hand-numbered edition of 100 copies. A sure winner for fans of raw punk and D-beat. (Matt) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, kaosdiystrorecords@gmail.com, rocksvbiscos@gmail.com, doderlein.diystro@gmail.com)

CAVES – *Betterment* – I'm pretty sure there is a powerviolence band called CAVES and I was excited. Apparently there is also a melodic band called CAVES that plays slick and anthemic music that I think is called pop-punk in 2014. This is the cassette version of a record that came out last year. (Robert) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, deadbrokerecords.com)

CIVIL UNION – These guys hail from New Zealand and play jangly indie pop/post-punk/shoegaze that has some strong resemblances to late '80s/early '90s SONIC YOUTH and SWELL MAPS. It's not a carbon copy though. Each song on here is strong and memorable. They sound instantly classic, like they were already your favorite song in a past lifetime. If you can track down this tape, I'd highly recommend doing so. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, civilunion.bandcamp.com)

COSMIC TOILET – Killer sounds from San Francisco that takes some of the quirky hooks from '80s UK anarcho and/or post-punk and injects a hint of street punk energy. The repetition of "World Piece Of Shit" is brilliant in its utter simplicity, and the guitar throughout the demo is a casual but confident attack. Repeat listens will surely reveal more nuances, but I was sold the first time—unique and instantly familiar. Excellent. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, Vanderkindren, 3220A 24th St., San Francisco, CA 94110, acosmictoilet.bandcamp)

COUNTDOWN TO ARMAGEDDON – *State of Lunacy* – This Seattle-based three-piece has been around for at least a decade now. The A-Side holds four new songs nearly reaching eighteen minutes. The sound is gruff and heavy post-punk. It's as if NEW MODEL ARMY was heavier, or if they played through TRAGEDY's gear or something. I mention NEW MODEL ARMY specifically because the melodies bring them to mind and they have a similar aura. The songs are a bit drawn out for my taste, but are interesting and sound great nonetheless. Fast forward through the rest of the dead space on Side A (yep) and you'll find a nearly 36-minute live set from 2012 where you'll discover crustier elements that give the band its heavier sound, revealing what they've maybe evolved from. (Matt) (13-song cassette, some lyrics included, Aborted Society, 1122 E Pike St #1377, Seattle, WA 98122-3934, abortedsociety.com)

CYANIDE TOOTH – *The Whole Tooth & Nothing But…* – Sparse, primitive industrial sounds. A live set on one side that moves far beyond blips and whirrs and sheet metal screams, entering into transcendental territories where the electronics lull and lure you even when there is seemingly nothing there. The flip is one extended track, and where the live CYANIDE TOOTH pulls intensity out of minimal sound, "Cinderella" makes all-out mindfuckery seem rather soothing. Lots of kids are jumping on various "old school" electronic and industrial bandwagons…but rarely with success like this. The label blurb says CYANIDE TOOTH are a new(ish) band and I can only imagine the force they can become when the vision is fully realized. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, Ever/Never, 160 Orchard St. 3F, New York, NY 10002, evernever-records.bandcamp.com)

FAILED MUTATION – *Give Into Sleep/Flood Gates* – Start/Stop. Fast/Faster. Punk/Killer. The riffs in "Give Into Sleep" are as good as anything you've heard this month… until "Flood" kicks your face in. Katherine's vocals are more confident than on the demo, and these Milwaukee kids are really good at shoving a killer catchy aggressive song down your throat before you even know what happened. Yes, please. (Robert) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, Ralph Rivera c/o L. Sherman, 2960 W. Montrose Ave, Chicago, IL 606218, notnormaltapes.bandcamp.com)

FAMILY OUTING – I think this came out last year?! But we got it this year after they had already called it quits. Part of the never-ending parade of incredible bands from London, this one featured people from GOOD THROB and STAB and it shows. The vocals are fucking insane, total brutality and rotting power like listening to VOID and NEGATIVE APPROACH at once, truly. This is hardcore, but it's weird and damaged and wrong in a compulsive manner. This band is so cool and totally subverts any dull HC rulebook to the extent that it almost sounds like someone explained what hardcore was to them without them ever hearing it?! I don't know, this obviously isn't outsider art or whatever, these are all people from known bands and they probably all have insanely sick record collections, but this is just so cool and hard to explain. I've seen them be compared to CRAZY SPIRIT and I sort of get why. This isn't wacky though—it's fucking raging. The song structure is wild and hard to pin down, while being tough and fuck you. The lyrics are incredible, total aggro alienation. So fucking good, why do all the good bands break up!? (Layla) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, familyoutingpuke.bandcamp.com)

THE FLACCIDS / SLURP'S UP – SLURP'S UP starts it off with "I Don't Trust Straight People," setting the tone for their screaming, pounding, garage and grunge-influenced queer-core. Songs about assimilation. Songs about disappointment. Songs about the ongoing tyranny of men. There's a vague, underlying MODERN LOVERS influence that I can't really shake, but SLURP'S UP is a little harsher than those guys ever were. The FLACCIDS are in the same boat, but maybe coming from more of a grunge/'90s influence. Their politics are worn firmly on their sleeves with songs like "Fuck Yr Macho White Boy Entitlement" and "You Always Look Like Shit". The fuzz sounds like it's turned up to ten on the distortion pedal and the vocals sway between talking and screaming. It's good, but I was sold more on SLURP'S UP. I don't really understand why only the FLACCIDS have a lyric sheet either, but that's the way it goes, I guess. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics included for one band, slurpsup.bandcamp.com)

FLAWS – Lazy but tightly-played hardcore with a thick bass sound and a peculiar surfy quality at times. The vocals are so unexpressive and quiet that it pretty much sucks all the energy, especially when halfheartedly saying "pissed off, shut up." The result just sounds unfinished. (Matt) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, pogoonyourfuckingface.blogspot.com)

GEMINIS – Bouncy, political street punk from Colombia. Male/female vocals, catchy riffs and an endearing, raw production. GEMINIS has been active since the late '90s, and this disc compiles tracks previously released between 2009-2013. (Robert) (19-song CD-R, lyrics not included, geminismusicdistro@gmail.com, geminismusicdistro.blogspot.com)

GREASY WHISTLES / THE LITTLE RICHARDS – *split* – Snappy garage punk from GREASY WHISTLES, endearing and good. Melodic garage punk from the LITTLE RICHARDS, who are at their best when they slow down a bit and swoon over the songs, and at their worst when they start to just turn into a run of the mill pop-punk outfit (I'm talking "4:20 Girl"—kids, that track is a clunker). But I bet the burners are probably especially good when everyone is

drunk. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, deadbrokerecords.com)

GRUMP – *Back To Being Normal* – Massive sounding apocalypse punk. Howling and strained vocals spit venom while a distorted mob gives birth to hooks from a distant past reincarnated as ferocious modern hardcore punk. And perhaps most importantly, these mutants can write the shit out of a killer punk song. GRUMP would be killer with none of the bombast, none of the distortion, none of the attitude, simply because the tracks are bangers. But whereas some bands use those tools (wisely) to hide shortcomings, they just make GRUMP better. Oh yeah, they're from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Respect, young punks. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, cody_cross@hotmail.com, grump.bandcamp.com)

A HANGING – These southern dudes play metal and crossover that sounds sweaty and dirty. It's from the dirty south…makes sense. To these ears, it sounds like a mash-up of ST VITUS, BIOHAZARD, FUDGETUNNEL, and crossover-years DRI. Quality metal is being played here with the kind of brevity that any fan of hardcore can appreciate. (Greg) (10-song mini CD-R, lyrics not included, PO Box 2334, Marrero, LA 70073, ahanging@paranoizenola.com)

HILLTOP RATS – I'm not sure if this is what the band is going for, but they sound like *S&M Airlines*-era NOFX and BAD RELIGION singing more about drinking and partying. And feminism…a little awkwardly, but I give them credit for it. It walks that weird, strange line between hardcore and pop punk. It's good for this style. (Greg) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, hilltoprats.bandcamp.com)

HOTH – *Oathbreaker* – Epic resonance from the deep reaches of space and time, HOTH creates careful and sophisticated blackened metal. The acoustic guitar intermissions (which might even be a mandolin) are dramatic and drawn out, making for a thought-provoking album. Wow, there are a ton of acoustic jams on this offering. Quite the avant-garde tape of mid-tempo noir-inspired soliloquies, from piano to acoustic with gothic audible lyrics. HOTH is a big fan of dramatic cymbal grabs too, which is also a good punctuation within the confusion of this album. That's okay, epic battles are always a little confusing. "The shield will be down in moments…" (Pssh. Yeah, right.) (Jason) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, deathculturetapes.bandcamp.com)

ISOTOPE – *Final Wind of Mercy* – A newer Bay Area punk band with a strong Japanese hardcore influence, specifically DEATHSIDE. Each song launches with a dramatic version of the verse riff, the drumming is fast and thunderous, and the riffs are satisfyingly epic in the Burning Spirits tradition. The only drawback is that the vocals are set back in the mix and drenched in too much reverb, making them kind of hard to follow. Cool tape, but with a little evolution I bet the next release will be ten times better. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, shithammerdistro@hotmail.com)

KNAVES GRAVE – Here's a discography tape by a band from Atlanta who I've never heard of. The art gives off a vibe of something floating between '80s art deco worship and Burger Records. I would assume that a band with song titles like "Get Off My Dick," "Calypso Cunt" and "Fuck Off Like Totally" would be pretty bad, but I'm wrong, ya'll!! Driving power pop influences and (yeah) '80s pop songs seem to be informing the direction of this band and it works for them. Every song is super fucking catchy in that kinda post-garage, surfy, breezy fun way. Recommended! (Greg) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, muckmanrecords.bandcamp.com)

LATEX – Furious Philadelphia HC that somehow sounds like early Midwestern brute simplicity with added UK82. Vocals are incredible, so fucking snotty/bratty, coupled with dystopian lyrics about social control and alienation. The singing reminds me of something between Chanel of LEBENDEN TOTEN and HONEY BANE! Total frenzy sound. This rules obviously. (Layla) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, worldgonemadrecords.bandcamp.com)

LIMBS BIN – *Live In Israel* – Sonically, this live LIMBS BIN tape is more harsh industrial intensity. Those familiar with his sounds will not be disappointed, and the uninitiated will have their minds melted by bursts of unimaginable electronic brutality. It's hardcore/powerviolence reborn as noise—if you need a reference point, start at BLOODY MINDED and then brace yourself. But more than the sonic presentation, this is a brief document of the LIMBS BIN three show tour in Israel in 2012…read Josh's liner notes while you listen and you will be moved. Powerful shit in every aspect, compounded by the inclusion of a field recording from a protest in Bil'n in the Palestinian West Bank. As much as I recommend LIMBS BIN releases in general (and there are a lot of them), this cassette is particularly impressive. (Robert) (?-track cassette, lyrics not included, trades welcome, followmeintothelasereye@gmail.com)

LOUIE LUST AND THE ALL NIGHT FEVER – *Dirty Couch* – Garage punk attitude and rapid-fire stripped-down punk is a combination, and LOUIE LUST and his gang throw a blown-out recording and jerky (or are they sloppy?) drums into the mix and launch this shit to the moon. Irreverent, shitty, punk as fukk…and good. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, no contact info)

MAKARRA – *Mierda De Hardkore* – This mean sounding hardcore with growly vocals is for the studded leather jacket crowd, but I liked it too. The recording doesn't sound very clean (the drum kit they use sounds especially budget) so that made me like them a little bit more. If this were to be cleaned up and put on vinyl, it would be a "rager." Like a fine wine, this tape gets better with age (repeated listens). MAKARRA is from Lima, Peru and their website says the band contains members of DHK. If that means anything to you, then you'll like this. (Vanessa) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, cvrecs.storenvy.com, repugnante_d@hotmail.com)

MAMA – I've been saying it for years: if you're gonna write stupid, sexist music, at least make it so catchy and irresistible that it's hard to talk shit about it, even from a PC fuck like me. MAMA did it. These mega-dudes play ultra tight power pop that is easily among the ranks of CHEAP TRICK, the ONLY ONES, GOLDEN EARRING (on speed) or 20/20. Yeah, I said "among the ranks," not "sounds like…" Their sound is stuck in the past, but they pull it off with style, not unlike the EXPLODING HEARTS did. I definitely don't want to be at the same party as these dudes, but I bet everybody's having a ton of fun without me. If you're into '80s power pop, you'll wanna be all over this one. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not inlcuded even though the online listing says "lyric sheet included," mamamamamama.bandcamp.com)

MARGY PEPPER – The last tape I heard by these Olympia-based humans had a summertime secret bedroom girl effervescence…This one is a flip of that switch; it's darker, moodier, denser. The added texture makes for a great wintertime listen. MARGY PEPPER is really good at creating a mood/feeling through sound. This is gloomy and atmospheric and otherworldly but also frenzied and real. It's got a campfire sinister attack, with savage guitars, plus urgent wall of sound vocal incantations from all three musicians. Really great cassette! (Layla) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, margypepper.bandcamp.com, nervousnelly.storeenvy.com)

MYNX/SKANLESS – *split* – The MYNX side opens with an ambient noise swell that eventually acquires a beat and shifts into a stomping but dance-worthy number with metallic vocal effects. SKANLESS tortures my eardrums with their style of harsh noise mixed with powerviolence. Lots of unrestrained feedback, screaming, drum bursts, and clipping bass. (Matt) (unclear-number-of-songs cassette, lyrics not included, mynxstynx.tumbl.com, luuuum.blogspot.com)

NEGATIVE RAGE – *Sensitive City* – Sharp, hook-filled punk with vocals that are spoken more than sung or shouted. There's an appeal to the In The Red world, but I feel like these monkeys are punk as shit (at least for now) and don't give half a fukk how anyone classifies them. The title track alone is worth the price of admission, and the rest of the demo is gravy. Delicious, savory

gravy. Nova Scotia has a lot of good bands these days... (Robert) (11-song demo, lyrics not included, cody_cross@hotmail.com)

NERVOUS ASSISTANT – Straightforward punk with melody from Bremen, Germany. There's something decidedly '90s-feeling about the delivery that falls somewhere between the camps of PEGBOY, SO MUCH HATE, and NEW BOMB TURKS (mostly in the vocal delivery). Masterful guitar work carries the whole thing and works to hook you into each song. Tons of energy and a great debut. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, sabotagerecords.net)

ORATIONS – I'm completely floored by the vocals on this tape. I kinda don't even know what words to use to describe them. Comparing her to SIOUXSIE is almost a copout because it's such a go-to comparison for goth/post-punk bands with female singers, and this deserves more. She must have some vocal training on top of heaps of raw talent, but beyond that the melodies and execution are so wonderfully theatrical and expressive. The lyrics are so strange and, well, great. Sorry rest of the band—I haven't talked about you yet. You're great and have all the sounds just right and create a beautiful dreamy soundscape, but your singer is the fucking star. This band could "make it" if they wanted to. If you dig goth and post-punk that's closer to the SIOUXSIE / CURE / MARCH VIOLETS side of the spectrum, *you absolutely need to hear this*! Like, now! Oh yeah, they're from Buffalo. I really want to see this band. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, sheetsoftens.com)

ORNITORRINCOS / RENEGADES OF PUNK – *Nuvem Passegeira* split – A split cassette from Brazil that pays homage to Hermes Aquino, Brazilian singer/songwriter from the late '60s and '70s. The cover of the tape has a mural of Hermes' face on it and both bands cover his song "Nuvem Passegeira," which is also the title of the cassette. Side A has ORNITORRINCOS who play fast and chaotic pop-punk and Side B is RENEGADES OF PUNK who play dark, almost garage-y hardcore. The singer's voice reminded me of Kathleen Hanna at times. I liked the RENEGADES OF PUNK side best, but liked ORNITORRINCOS cover of "Nuvem Passegeira" better because it sounded like a protest song, sung with an acoustic guitar. This tape was refreshing—both bands have their own style and I felt like I got a taste of what it's like to be a punk in Brazil. (Vanessa) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, ornitorrincos.bandcamp.com, melhoramentos@gmail.com)

RUBY BUFF – I would tell you to get this tape on the strength of the first song alone. It's a perfect indie pop song in the vein of Midwestern sweethearts LEG or like a poor man's BUILT TO SPILL. The rest of the tape is great too. Throughout Side A, the band expands on the jangly, indie punk approach with contemplative, yet upbeat songs. Good shit. Side B does a 180 and starts off with a faster, more direct power pop number that recalls some of the more aggressive tracks from one of those old *Powerpearls* LP comps. Overall, this is a great, strong tape from this newer band. Looking forward to hearing more. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, rubybuff.bandcamp.com, rubybuffed@gmail.com)

THE SLABS – Caveman stomp for those who like their sounds rudimentary and remedial. Sounds like this was recorded live somewhere where they weren't wanted. If you like your garage punk dumb and destructive, frustrated and frustrating then this is the ticket! (Layla) 10-song cassette, lyrics not included, theslabs.bandcamp.com)

SLENDER – Shit-fi puke punk for shit-brained puke eaters. Like AB GAS meets PSYCHO SIN reincarnated as human play-doh. Genius, stupid, repulsive. This has pictures of a band posing on various roofs and abandoned lots in and around Brooklyn and no contact info! Really enjoyed listening to this. Is this real? Dollar store punk for dollar store punkers. (Layla) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, papertowncompany.bigcartel.com)

SLUMS OF THE FUTURE – Yes. Just…yes. Hardcore needs to be like this. Hardcore needs to be fast. And weird. And chaotic. SLUMS OF THE FUTURE skip all the bullshit and all the trends and just blast the shit out of blistering howling relentless hardcore that doesn't even seem to let up when they breakdown. Snare drum sounds like a paper sack and "Self Replication" is the most punch-yourself-in-the-face song I have had in my life in a long, long time. I could go on for sentences and sentences but no one wants that…just get this. Fuck. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Kent, 6548 Corte Valdez, Carlsbad, CA 92009, compressedthought.bandcamp.com)

THE SNIFFS – *A Bad Time* – I'll bet the SNIFFS get put on crappy bills in their town and blow all the other bands out of the water. This band from Washington D.C. sounds like they're on the cusp of making it big but not in a "we only play festivals" sort of way. Their energetic garage punk sounds like something Burger Records would put out (and I don't mean that as a dig). It kind of reminds me of that one pizza-themed band whose name I will not mention. My favorite song on this tape is "Camry," probably because it has an organ in it and I usually like any band with a keyboard, synth or organ. Whoever recorded and produced this tape did a good job. (Vanessa) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, thesniffs.bandcamp.com, jamesdoubek@gmail.com)

SÓL – *Black Mountain* – Black Mountain begins with a surprisingly melodic instrumental that feels parts alternative metal and parts doom drone. The vocals are uniquely hardcore above lucid guitar tones and heart working drum rhythms. SÓL is a hot mix between post-hardcore and macabre loner metal. Between the four tracks the songs rage from wicked hardcore metal to relaxed transcendence. As with most post-hardcore, for me, the vocals could ease into the music more, which is beautiful, and burn with it. It is very captivating. The balance is right and this is an easy album to get into. It's a lot like staring at fire, actually. Is there a sub-sub-sub genre called "ember metal" yet? That's SÓL, folks. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, deathculturetapes.bandcamp.com)

SPLASHIN' SAFARI – So Not Normal Tapes is doing a cassingle series. For those of you not paying attention (at least those of you who like punk), this is a very good idea and you need to *leap* on this shit. Ass shaking, catchy, fast punk, kinda like watching the nice kid next door flip their shit and thinking *"damn, didn't know they were that pissed."* And then the last track is a perfect teen anthem that makes me feel like I felt the first time I heard WHITE TRASH SUPERMAN…a lesson for pop punk bands, because pop(py) punk needs to have a certain indefinable *something*, and SPLASHIN' SAFARI has it. (Robert) 3-song cassette, lyrics not included, Ralph Rivera c/o L. Sherman, 2960 W. Montrose Ave, Chicago, IL 606218, notnormaltapes.bandcamp.com)

SUBSISTENCH – It's funny to me that this whole slime punk/mutant rock scene has become a "thing", but really, this is just gross, fucked-up, feedback-and-shitty-drugs-fueled punk. If this band showed up at one of those shows where punks were rolling around in goo or tying shit to their dicks while watching LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS or DAWN OF HUMANS, everyone would keep pogoing throughout their set. The singer is riding that perfect wave of bratty, fucked up and deranged in a way that sounds real, not forced. Overall, excellent, fucked-up, pissed tape. Get this. (Greg) (5-song tape, lyrics included, 3913 Rue St Jacques, Montreal, QC H4C 1H7 CANADA, swollencityrecords.bandcamp.com)

SUTEKH HEXEN – *Become* – I don't know anything about this band. I love the name and I love the tape. It's terrifying. It is a fully immersive wash of nightmarish death fever. It's insane and barbaric and sort of hugs you with grim warmth. Once I was able to let go and let it devour me, I was way into it. There are corrosive layers but the total abyss of the sound is so viscid it feels soothing and as welcoming as flypaper. This is not chaos, it is universal noise we will all recognize. Moments reminded me of ENSLAVED's *Slaget i skogen bortenfor* yet *Become* is far richer of evil. Keep calm and feel the darkness. (Jason) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, sutekhhexen.org)

TEAM UGLY – After getting past the first stupid song ("Why Won't Anybody Have Sex With Me?"), this tape picks up, with the band playing off-kilter, bouncy, screamy, synth-driven post-punk. I mean it when I say "screamy." One song consists of

the band members just screaming…no other musical accompaniment…for like a minute and a half, which is either brilliant or awful or both. Don't let that deter you though. The rest of the songs sound like a basement dance party running off the rails. Bratty and insistent…like 100 beers into a night that never ends. Also, they're from New Zealand. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, team-ugly.bandcamp.com)

TERMINAL NATION – Yes. Just…*yes*. Nasty sounding bulldozing hardcore from Arkansas. The vocals are almost comical in the hollow voiced growling sXe tradition, but when "How Will You Be Remembered" drops I erase that comical shit from my mind and settle in for a genuine pummeling. The breakdown of "Preexisting Condition" obliges me and I realize that this is the real deal. Lyrically pertinent and intentional, with a hardcore attack that is primal…but with screaming solos. Yeah, this shit is good. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, rarebearrecords@gmail.com)

UNREAL THOUGHT – *Behind The Pink House* – Retro dance goth with bellowing vocals and dominating clean guitars, recalling early proto-goth that was seeping out of the punk scene. Beats here are courtesy of a drum machine, and when UNREAL THOUGHT slow the pace the result is more than morose, like dreamy funeral doom. Excellent regurgitation on this short but sweet demo. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, unrealthought.bandcamp.com, cody_cross@hotmail.com)

URINPROBE – *Hetzjagd* – Gruff, lurching punk with metallic undertones (though those mostly come from gratuitous use of the double bass pedal) and a heavy influence from '80s DeutschPunk. The first couple of tracks didn't grab me, but this one picks up steam and even *(especially?)* the more rudimentary tracks turn into killers. Awkward, feisty, and not even a little bit "cool"…and therefore very cool. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o L. Schneider, Hirschweg 7, 49393 Lohne GERMANY, urinprobe.bandcamp.com)

WRECKED LEXUS – Street punk in the weird rock club sense of the word, but the drums are a little off and the vocals (especially the backups) are ever so slightly off-key. Sounds like they spent some coin on the recording, and the songs have this snotty but slick feel, like I think they want to be famous. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, wreckedlexus.bandcamp.com)

ZAP – Minus two points for sending in a tape that sounds so shitty that I had to bang these tunes on the internet to even tell what ZAP sounded like…but plus *one million* points for ZAP sounding like they fukkn do! The whole thing is less than four minutes of snappy punk with burning classic rock sensibilities condensed into sub 60-second emissions and crazed vocals that ooze more attitude than hate (though not by much). So damn good, man…so damned good. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, Ralph Rivera c/o L. Sherman, 2960 W. Montrose Ave, Chicago, IL 606218, notnormaltapes.bandcamp.com)

LES ZERREURS – Uncommon guitar and bass interplay, mostly angular and choppy in fashion, but not without structure or appeal. They play strangely, but get along, if that makes any sense. Shouting trade-off vocals help to keep the pattern going. Sort of reminds me of some of the more aggressive LOST SOUNDS stuff taken to the next level and without the keyboards. Interesting and cool. I'm feeling this. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, leszerreurs.bandcamp.com)

ZORAKARER – *Clarion Call of Destiny* – This is very good symphonic noir metal. Artistic, entrancing, so-fast-it-drones, and sort of pirate-y, with tons of layers. Keyboards abound; both chamber-like and very inspired synthesized phrases. All that HECATE ENTHONED shit going on here. Vocals are tight like CENTINEX, not blown out "I'm trying to lose my voice on this first take" style. I'm into it. Plenty of mid-tempo breakdowns and gothic ambiance. Castlevania, eat your heart out. A lot of cold, dark work went into this and it is well worth checking out. It might not sit with the brutes at the *Blackend Volume 1* lunch table, per say, but it could definitely hang from the bars with the *Blackend Volume 4* kids. And we're swinging… (Jason) (9-song cassette, deathculturetapes.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *Area Friends Compilation* – Fuzzed out garage punk, weird electronic sounds, early college rock rehashes and bits of confident crooning, Kentucky label Ghost Orchard has put together an excellent collection of jammers. BARBARIETTES are my faves, high energy sassy shits of the highest order, while CHRIS BLACK is some next level atmospheric indie pop (maybe it's not my jam, but it's probably the best song on the tape) and ANT ELOPE sounds like a mix between primitive new wave and an '80s workout video soundtrack (that means it's awesome, in case you were wondering). Something here for everyone except hardcore purists (but there's another demo for those monkeys somewhere in this section), this comp is more than solid—it's actually interesting. (Robert) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, ghostorchardrecords.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *"FSDC3"* – This is a compilation tape of mostly whiny dudes playing acoustic songs and tepid pop songs. It has a "Record Store Day" sticker on it. SERVICE offers up a pretty good indie rock song but the lyrics are painful. Honestly, that could be said about most of the songs on here. I found myself trying to figure out which one has the best chance of being on a future car commercial. Answer? Any of them besides RAW MCCARTNEY and the BLOODY MESS. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, gloryholerecords.com)

ZINES

Send zines for review to: ***MRR, PO Box 46760, San Francisco, CA 94146.*** *Please include the following information on a separate piece of paper with you zine: postpaid price, international price, if you take trades, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, and email address.*

Reviewers:
(AG) Alison Gaye
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DV) Diana Vashti
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(JB) Julia Booz
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JM) Jeff Mason
(KC) Kyle Canyon
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulos
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MP) Max Power
(OG) Oscar Gutierrez
(SF) Sami Fink
(VX) Vanessa Asswipe

COMMUNICATING VESSELS #26
Donation / 48 pgs

Out in time for the holidays, this issue of *Communicating Vessels* is themed, "An Ode To The Festival Of Life." As a person who hates most "real" official holidays, but loves a righteous celebration, this focus was appreciated. They examine medieval seasonal festivals in contrast with our clock-driven society, and share the story of their own participation in Tucson's All Souls procession, calling attention to a local man murdered in his own home by the Tucson SWAT team. A reprint from an early '50s anarchist journal recounts a dull New York party, and elaborates on what was missing. Their radical social critique looks at the demise of the US Post Office and the terrible town they live in. Past issues have vexed with me their focus on literature, particularly fiction, in which I have no interest and tend to devalue. This theme is continued here with an appreciation for Chaucer, Shakespeare, and William L. Gresham's *Nightmare Alley*. I'm also an unsophisticated consumer of film, so the examination of *Night of the Hunter* was largely wasted on me. Conversely, I was thrilled by the short piece on starting Gibbon's mammoth *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* There is a letters column, sometimes with extended responses from the editor, and periodical reviews. The most noticeable part of the zine is the printing, done by the editors themselves, very similar in style to Tucson's *The Match!*, to an exquisite result. Their pricing parallels *The Match!* as well, meaning they accept donations. Please send (at least!) $3-5 if you can. I generally enjoy *Communicating Vessels* and this was my favorite issue yet. (JM)
PO Box 2048 / Tucson, AZ 85702

CRETINS OF DISTORTION #5 / KILL YR PARENTS GARDEN #9
$2, trades OK / 14 pgs

This thing is fucking sick. It's a split, so once you get halfway through, just flip it over and you've got yourself another zine. The *Cretins of Distortion* side does not disappoint (when do they ever?) and this time around it's focused on pre-1990 Midwest punk. It's chock-full of write-ups on 31 Midwest bands, from well-known groups like Naked Raygun to those you may have never heard of like Amoebas in Chaos. A lot of the smaller bands can be heard on the *Red Snerts* comp (which I am listening to right now, and it is seriously great). These write-ups are the first in a series of 100 Midwest bands you should know about and I can't wait for more. The *C.O.D.* side ends with a word search of "ten sick bands" that you should probably check out as well. The *Kill Yr Parents Garden* side consists of an intro and an interview with T-Mac of American Hate, Glow God, and Anti-Patterns. Even though the interview is titled "T-Mac on OKC Punk" it focuses mostly on the squatting scene in Berlin. There's also a bit on the importance of expressing yourself and not falling into moshing trends. Every thing is photocopied and in a cut'n'paste layout, which gives it a very authentic punk aesthetic. The combination of both of these zines into one gives you everything you would want in a punk zine, and if you don't check it out then you probably suck or just aren't that punk. (KC)
2656 Dayton Ave., Columbus, OH. 43202 / emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com

HLUBOKÁ ORBA #30
$7 ppd / 200 pgs

This is a whopper of a zine from Brno in the Czech Republic, going strong and still killing it! This is massive and looks beautiful, with its thick stock and color cover, with a neat but punk-looking layout! You can tell a lot of love and care went into making this and I only wish I could read Czech in order to dive into the copious amount of content within: columns by a variety of writers, festival and tour reports, interviews, reviews and more. The note that came with it said, "it has three US tour reports of European bands dealing with often annoying and shitty extreme individuality/inhospitality and disorganization of the US DIY touring circuit. You are lucky you don't understand the language..." Dammit! In this issue you'll find tour reports by bands Gattaca and Remek, Gride and Turbokrieg, and See You In Hell, interviews with the Czech zine *A-Kontra*, Czech bands (Brünner Todesmarsch, Yarvar Cocha), Japan's Strange Factory, the UK's Endless Grinning Skulls, Indonesia's Total Banxat, and Boston's No Sir, I Won't, and conversations with Jason Flower of Canada's reissue label Supreme Echo, and Luk Haas of Tian An Men 89 Records—man, I wish I could have read that one! Mr. Haas is a real inspiration when it comes to unearthing punk from the deepest pockets of the planet! All that plus split interviews with Japan's Contrast Attitude and Acrostix, and Sheeva Yoga and Tummo; a reprint of an old Czechoslovakia scene report from *MRR,* what seem to be a Vienna punk report, and concert and scene reports from various cities around the Czech Republic, plus a roundup of Brno shows between 2012 and 2013. Lastly, extended record reviews (the shortest is probably 250 words, going up to probably 500 or so), and lots and lots of great pictures! The feature I would have liked to have read the most is See You In Hell's US tour report (26 pages long!), written by true hardcore believer, Filip, who plays in the band, puts this zine together and also runs Hluboká Orba Records. The band actually came to *MRR* the day they landed, coincidentally on Punxgiving! There are even some pictures of the *MRR* compound, the Czechs smashing a piñata, and local bands and punks! An amazing job, essential if you can read Czech! And even if not, if you're into the global crust, D-beat, hardcore and political punk DIY scene ("not just US/Swedish/Japanese/Spanish" as his note puts it), you should get this, if only for your archive! This is how it's done. (LA)
Filip Fuchs, U Dolni 31 60200, Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC / orba@seznam.cz

INHUMAN CONDITION
$5 / 24 pgs

An "adults only" short newsprint comic that reads like a mini-graphic novel. I'm not up on artists enough to compare the illustration style to anyone, but the story

basically involves an unnamed main character delivering some type of serum with cancer-suppressing properties from the main radiation-strewn world to a quarantined "gated community" that represents idealized suburbia, due to his ability to travel between the two. The characters he encounters along the way, such as two mutants having public sex and a burning at the stake, sometimes interact with him and sometimes don't, but don't really add to the plot other than to illustrate the population of this toxic, alien world. Not bad, but the story is a bit short and without climax, and does not so far appear to be part of a planned larger work. (DG)
Andrew Scully, 5252 NE 19th Ave., Portland, OR 97211 / andrew-scully.com

KOOGMO #8
$1 / 18 pgs
Dead-end soul sucking tech jobs, flea market wing-nuts, and fatherhood anecdotes abound in *Koogmo*. I like this rag, 8.5 x 11" and stapled in the top left corner. This issue showcases a play written by a California prisoner named E-CYPH. It's a deep-n-maddening story called *HELL'S LOBBY* that takes place in a solitary confinement unit in a men's prison but features two characters. It's honestly really uncomfortable to read, but I mean that in a good way. The rest of the issue is mostly Anthony pondering the life he could have without his shitty job. Shit is hard. (EC)
PO BOX 861294, Plano, TX 75086

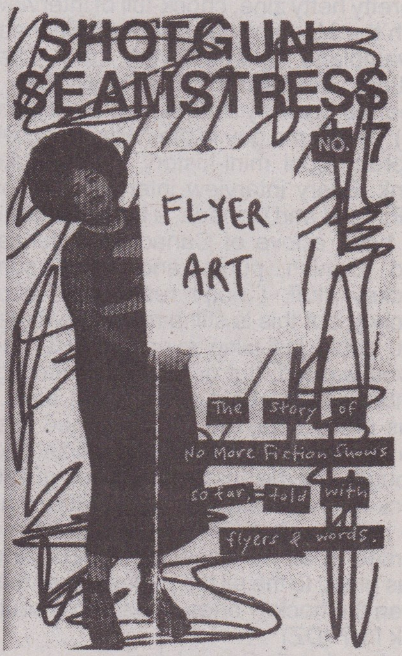
NEUROTIC & NAUSEATED #1: WHISKEY LIPS, MILK THISTLE ROSARY
$1.50ppd, trades OK / 8 pgs
A nice first iteration of a perzine that hopefully grows and expands with each issue, made up mostly of short blurbs about love and punk that reminded me of stuff I see on Tumblr. The cut and paste style is simple but not boring and the editor bares their soul and musical taste so you get a sense of what they're all about. It's great to see something come out of Oklahoma because I never see or hear about anything going on in that barren state. Maybe now is the time. The cover also has one lone tarot card on it—but I won't tell you which one. (VX)
Ali Munster, PO BOX 336, Glenpool, OK 74033 / alimunster13@gmail.com / neuroticandnauseated.tk

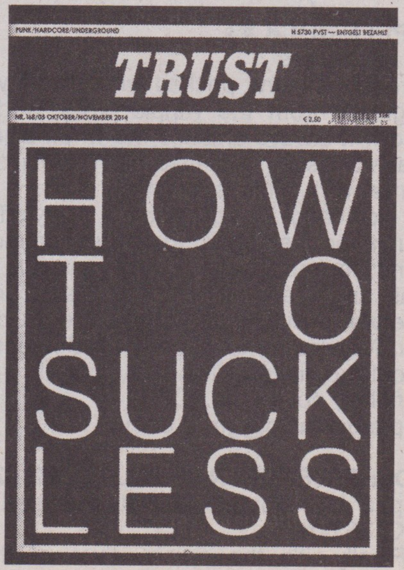
NO PLACE FOR A VACATION
78 pgs
Andru's obviously worked really hard to put out a lengthy and beautiful magazine. Fuck, it even has a title page. He's penned a lengthy story about going to Isreal on birthright and extending his trip to Palestine and Egypt. Do I get to talk about the moral ambiguity of crossing a boycott line to take a free vacation even though I'm also jealous? Can I address how he writes really weirdly about women and sex and still think he's, like, a good writer? Can I talk about accruing social capital for "witnessing" (but never actually risking) as a form of activism that sickens me 'cause it's so freakishly pervasive while still enjoying the narrative? I don't know. (EC)
noplaceforavacation@gmail.com

PARANOIZE #35
$3ppd US, $4ppd world / 20 pgs
Zine centered on the doom/sludge/whatever metal scene and a bit of punk in New Orleans. It's a good look into what's happening down there especially when the editor Bobby says, "I still try to give my support as much as possible but since there are sometimes three shows happening a night, it's pretty much impossible..." Bobby also does two internet radio shows a week—one of which is similar to this zine. The interviews are fairly in-depth especially the one with Kyle Thomas (Crowbar, Trouble, Exhorder, etc). It covers a variety of his bands and a bit of his connections with various people in the metal scene. Funny that he mentions seeing Razor White, Phil Anselmo's first band when he was fourteen. Memphis' Evil Army, NOLA-area Mule Skinner, and House of Goats are also interviewed. Finally, the music reviews cover punk/HC, crossover, grind and a bunch of current metal. I'd like to see more interviews with garage/punk/HC bands from the NOLA area in the future but I suppose the previous 34 issues of *Paranoize* might just have some of that. (JD)
P.O. Box 2334, Marreo, LA 70073

PASAZER #31
22 zloty / 208 pgs
This thing is kinda like the Polish version of *Maximum*, except it is fucking huge. Actually, I'd say this thing is more like the punk rock Polish *Rolling Stone*. There are interviews with classics like COCK SPARRER, the MOB, BLACK FLAG, and John Lydon/PIL, along with more contemporary bands like BELGRADO and HARD SKIN. It seems like they have columns and reviews as well as band interviews. The content in this seems A+—the only problem is I don't speak a lick of Polish. But if you do then you should find yourself a copy. (KC)
pasazer@pasazer.pl

RAZORCAKE #83
$4 US / 114 pgs
Black Rainbow graces the cover of the latest edition of *Razorcake*. My first thought was "Black Rainbow are still kicking?" followed closely by "Black Rainbow are still kicking!" These dynamic DIY'ers are solid and it was refreshing to read the interview talking about getting back on the road and their new jams. There is also a moving critique piece on cultural stereotypes and the stupidity of the "So, What are you?" question, which points out that lived experiences vary





greatly between members who share broad stereotyping unfairly (i.e. the lived experience of second generation immigrants vs. those further down the American-born family tree). This issue also features a spotlight on Tor Johnson Records, and Aztlan Underground. As usually the zine features columns, reviews and comics, much like the zine you are holding now. Also, Nardwuar interviews Waxahatchee. I particularly enjoyed Kettnerd's No Babies comic. (DV)
razorcake.org

RIPPLE ROCK #2
$5 / 80 pgs

The subtitle of this issue is "The Kings of Punk, Hockey, and Beer," and normally I would roll my eyes and groan. I think I did, and I still encourage you, dear readers, to do the same. This Finnish Canadian author isn't just whistlin' Dixie, though. It's a pretty hefty zine, chock-full of interviews with the Mountain Goats, Joey Shithead, Swampland, the Shivvers, the Chain Letters, the owner of Burnt Hickory, a Georgia brewery that makes punk beers (!!!), and some guy in the NHL, along with a pretty cool mini-history of Milwaukee punk. Every interview intertwines a love of Finland and Canada, a brief discussion on beer, a love of Canadian, American, and Finnish punk, and lastly some hockey stuff. I don't really care about hockey, but this is still a really great read. You could just skip over the NHL dude if you wanted, but don't. I did, then I got embarrassed about it and went back. It was pretty cool, too. This seemed like it was going to be pretty generalize and I thought maybe just those beer guzzlin' hockey lovers stuck in the 1980s would be into this, but the author is pretty well versed in all his chosen subjects, and I was glued to the all the pages...eventually even the hockey ones. What more could I ask for? (DZ)
ripplerockradio@gmail.com

RIPPLE ROCK #3
$5 / 62 Pages

A rock'n'roll zine packed with interviews originally from the Ripple Rock Radio Show. It always amazes me when zines reach 3 issues, because that's definitely some work. This is definitely a more of an old school zine that did not really offer much for me, other than the common punk rocker question and answer: "I was angry and so I created a band." Interviews with Shonen Knife, Pere Ubu, and Melvins, amongst others. Someone should definitely like this, but it was definitely not for me. (OG)
ripplerockradio@gmail.com

ROCHESTER TEEN SET OUTSIDER #29
$1ppd US, $3ppd international, trades OK / 36 pgs.

Finally, it's the music issue of this teen zine based out of Rochester, NY: one interview with garage musician Davie Allan and five interviews with local musicians who also happen to be the editor's friends. It also includes an amusing essay on why nobody should be in a band. The underlying theme in all of the interviews is to not give up on punk and to have fun and not give a fuck what other people think. Always a funny and fun read, but wait! This is the last issue of *Rochester Teen Set Outsider* zine before they become *National Teen Set Outsider* magazine, so get yourself a copy before they sell out (in more ways than one). (VX)
W. Carroll, 32 Edmonds St, Rochester NY 14607 / rochesterteensetoutsider.com

SHOTGUN SEAMSTRESS #7
60 pgs

I've never met Osa Atoe, but she's been an inspiration to me for several years. Every issue of her zine *Shotgun Seamstress* is essential reading. (And luckily for you, they were recently collected in a book! Buy or die!) Back in Philadelphia, I co-organized a festival of bands all playing their very first shows. We unabashedly ripped the format directly from Not Enough Fest, organized by Osa and the rest of the No More Fiction collective in New Orleans. While previous issues were focused on the experiences and histories of Black punks, this iteration of the zine focuses on the work No More Fiction does to create "woman- and queer-positive all-ages DIY shows." Here, Osa collects flyers and stories from the shows she's organized in New Orleans over the years—so many gigs I wish I hade been at! Essential reading for anyone who still believes in the potential for DIY shows to be a space for social change and a reminder to all of us that intentionality still has a place in hardcore and punk. Queers and femmes, see ya in the pit. (GA)
shotgunseamstress.blogspot.com / shotgunseamstress@gmail.com

TALES FROM THE SPIT #1
$3-5 / 18 pgs.

What's this shit called love? *Tales From the Spit* is a comic zine done right. Both visually pleasing and emotionally engaging, this is a (true) heart-breaking story of the artist's confusing and emotionally abusive relationship with an ex-partner. Jenn leaves no detail out as she explains the blissful beginnings and the bitter, painful end. Jenn's story is very personal and involves addiction, sex, being homeless, and other topics that don't make this story very pretty, but to me, these are the best kinds of zines. Another example why these little paper things we all like are not just things that we read, but tools used to help both the artist and reader heal. This helped me through a rough time and I would recommend it to anyone who has been through similar shit. Jenn is also part of the Mission Mini Comix collective, so you may have seen her rad artwork before. (VX)
fucktheface@riseup.net

TRUST #168
€2.50 / 66 pgs

I wish I knew at least enough German to be able to review the copies of *Trust* that *MRR* keeps getting sent for review every other month for who knows how long. The cover feature is entitled "How to Suck Less," which is possibly some sort of political manifesto. There're also interviews with Slovenly Records, Anti-Fascist Action, a plethora of book, zine, and record reviews, ads, and a few show listings. (DG) *[Editor's Note: Do you live in the Bay Area? Are you fluent in a language other than English? We want you to come review zines at* MRR! *Get in touch: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com]*
Dolf Hermannstadter, Postfach 11 07 62 28087 Bremen, GERMANY

WORNOUT #1
22 pgs

Neat cut'n'paste zine outta New Zealand that has a good interview with the A389 label (Iron Reagan, Noisem, etc). I was amused by label-head Dom's dream show: "Ned's Atomic Dustbin and Bound Count…or Lip Cream." There're also instructions and illustrations on how to make a basic snare trap, which I as a non-hunter/vegetarian wasn't interested in. The interview with Gehenna (Reno) is pretty interesting even though I always found this band incredibly boring. The New Zealand powerviolence band Losses is up next and while this question format was very basic, it still looks nice among the photos, flyers and random comic images. The last band interview is with punks Generation Dead (also from New Zealand) which mentions the after-gig festivies as "vegan curry or soup and homebrew for everyone!" Sounds like a good plan. Lastly, there're a couple of music reviews and a talk with the organizer behind South Island (Christchurch)'s Punkfest. Lest I forget the instructions on how to make your own mead. (JD)
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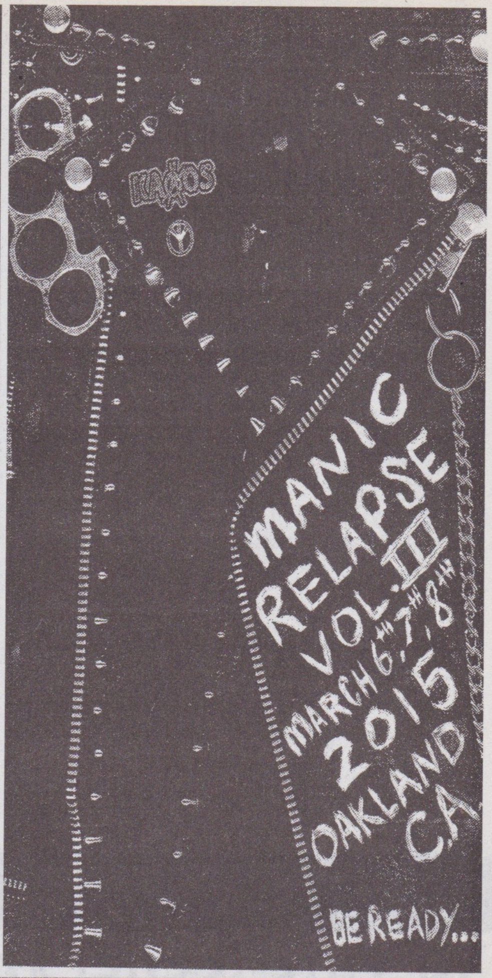

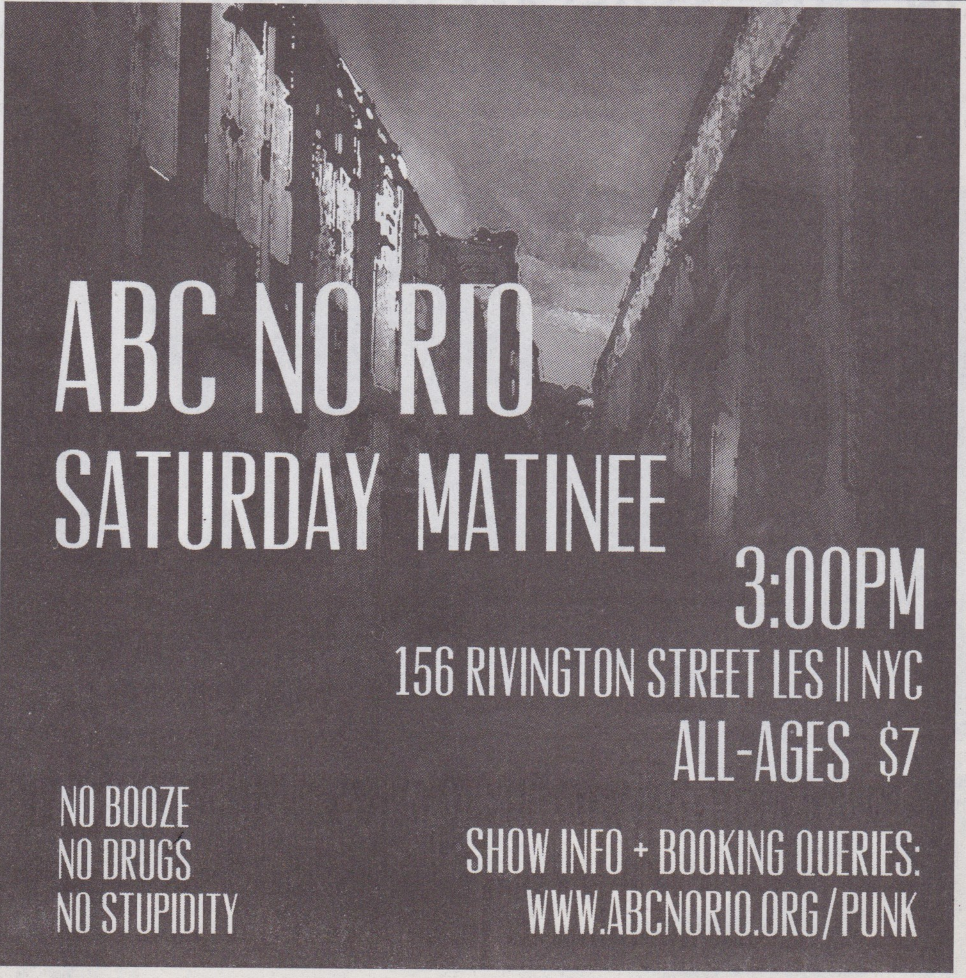

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